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CONFIRMATION

BY THE RIGHT REV.

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EDITORS' PREFACE

THE object of the Oxford Library of Practical Theology is to supply some carefully considered teaching on matters of Religion to that large body of devout laymen, who desire instruction, but are not attracted by the learned treatises which appeal to the theologian. One of the needs of the time would seem to be, to translate the solid theological learning, of which there is no lack, into the vernacular of everyday practical religion; and while steering a course between what is called plain teaching on the one hand and erudition on the other, to supply some sound and readable instruction, to those who require it, on the subjects included under the common title 'The Christian Religion,' that they may be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them, with meakness and fear.

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The Editors, while not holding themselves precluded from suggesting criticisms, have regarded their proper task as that of editing, and accordingly they have not interfered with the responsibility of each writer for his treatment of his own subject.

W. C. E. N.

F. E. B.

PREFATORY NOTE

PERHAPS an explanation may be due of the method followed in the following treatise. For the class of readers for whom the series of volumes of Practical Theology is primarily intended, it seemed to the writer best to begin with Confirmation as actually administered in our Churches, according to the order prescribed in the Prayer Book. This, it may be taken for granted, is fairly well known. It is necessary to show the origin and warrant of this rite from the New Testament, and the correspondence of our service with the ministration of the Apostles, marking the varying customs and theories which have gathered round the rite in different ages and in different parts of Christendom. This plan seemed preferable to that of beginning with an examination of the New Testament passages which may be thought to bear upon the question. It is

easier to begin with what is concrete and before our eyes, and to justify its existence and explain its character, than to work up to this from hints which, for their right understanding, require the commentary of the Church's practice.

The Revised Version has generally been used in scriptural quotations, both on account of its greater accuracy and vividness, and because the very unfamiliarity of its phrases often serves to arrest attention.

In spite of occasional obscurity of style, the author has not hesitated to quote freely from both Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, because he is persuaded that there is much in the treatises of these representative Anglican divines which it is exceedingly desirable at the present day to spread among our people.

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CONFIRMATION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

CONFIRMATION, while distinctly subordinate to the two great Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, has a very special importance of its own.¹ For practical, subjective purposes, this is pre-eminently the case in the Anglican communion.² With us Confirmation gives the opportunity for a formal and public self-dedication on the part of those who have been baptized in infancy. This, as will be shown,³ is not Confirmation, but the condition appointed by the Church for receiving the gift bestowed in Confirmation. For another large class of persons (particularly in America),⁴ whose

¹ Concerning the relation of Confirmation and other lesser sacramental rites to the two great Sacraments of the Gospel, see p. 37.

² This phrase, if possibly open to objection from some points of view, is sufficiently clear in meaning. It stands for those Churches, of British origin, which are in communion with the see of Canterbury.

³ See p. 4.

⁴ See note at the end of this chapter.

■ CONFIRMATION

training has been in one or other of the many religious bodies outside the historical Church, Confirmation presents itself as the means of formal admission thereto, and preparation for Confirmation affords the opportunity for their proper instruction in the teaching of the Church.¹ No other opportunity like that of Confirmation, in its naturalness and general acceptance, is open to our clergy for impressing on their people the truths of our religion for Christian faith and Christian life. To neglect it, or to fail to use it profitably, is a grievous fault on the part of the clergy, entailing grievous loss to our people and to the Church. It is therefore of the greatest importance that there should be a clear idea of the nature of Confirmation, and of the proper preparation for its reception.

With regard to Confirmation, we are confronted with several questions, each of which must be considered :

i. As to the *identity* of the rite now administered by the Church with the Laying on of hands by the apostles (Chapter II.).

ii. As to the *mode* of its administration—by the Laying on of hands or by Anointing (Chapter III.).

¹ Questions concerning lay and sectarian Baptism will be considered later (Chapter V.).

iii. As to the *minister*, whether it is reserved exclusively to a bishop, or may under any circumstances be given by a presbyter (Chapter IV.).

iv. As to the *gift and its relation to Baptism*. Is it a fuller bestowal of the gift of the indwelling Spirit conferred in Baptism, or is this indwelling of the Spirit the distinctive gift of Confirmation? (Chapter V.)

v. As to *its relation to Holy Communion*. Should it in all normal cases precede the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, or may Holy Communion be given before Confirmation? (Chapter VI.)

vi. As to the *age* of the recipient (Chapter VII.);

vii. And the *preparation* required for its reception (Chapter VIII.).

This will naturally lead to a consideration of the meaning of the Baptismal Vows which are solemnly renewed as a preparation for Confirmation (Chapter IX.), and to a fuller and more devotional treatment of the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, as implied in the Seven Gifts of the Spirit for which we ask at Confirmation (Chapter X.); in the title 'the Comforter' by which He is described (Chapter XI.); in the name commonly given to Confirmation, the Seal of the Spirit (Chapter XII.); and in the Fruit of the Spirit, which should be the result of His indwelling (Chapter XIII.).

Before entering upon a discussion of these several questions, it will be well at the outset to clear the ground by an absolute repudiation of the idea of Confirmation which is very common among uninstructed people, who regard it as the way in which Church-people, or those who desire to become such, (*a*) make an open profession of religion, (*b*) are admitted into fellowship with the Church, and (*c*), in the case of those who have been baptized in infancy, take their vows upon themselves. These popular misconceptions of the object of Confirmation are easily recognised as incompatible with the Prayer Book, as well as, it may be plainly said, with Christian reason. We do not speak of candidates for Confirmation preparing to confirm but to be confirmed. Here, as in all sacraments and ministrations of the Church, it is not man's action but God's which is chiefly to be considered, not what we do but what we receive. Confirmation does indeed afford an opportunity for those who have been baptized in infancy to renew in their own persons the promises and vows that were made by their godparents on their behalf and in their name; and the Anglican Church has thought good to make this solemn renewal of baptismal vows an introduction to the reception of Confirmation: but the renewal of the vows is no more Confirmation

than the making of the vows is Baptism. In each case the Church requires a certain public profession of proper dispositions for receiving the gift, as a condition of the administration of the rite. The profession, however valuable, is incidental; it is not the purpose of Confirmation. Incidentally we make some sort of profession every time we join in public worship; but this is not the purpose for which we take part in common prayers, either in the family or in church.

The preface to the Order of Confirmation in the Prayer Book makes clear the Church's doctrine concerning it. 'To the end that Confirmation may be ministered *to the more edifying* of such as shall *receive it*, the Church hath thought good to order, That none shall *be Confirmed*, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and can also answer to such other Questions, as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed; to the end that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same; and also promise, that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour

themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.'

Before the last revision of the English Prayer Book, in 1662, the Order of Confirmation began with the versicle and response, 'Our help is in the Name of the Lord, etc.' Neither the Prayer Book of 1549 nor those of 1552 and 1559 contained any renewal of vows. The office was preceded by such questions from the Catechism as the bishop saw fit to ask. The present question asked by the bishop, 'Do ye here, etc.?' is the last relic of this public catechising at the time of Confirmation.

The substance of the present preface was contained in rubrics prefixed to the office in the earlier post-Reformation Prayer Books. The reading of the preface is left optional in the revised American Prayer Book.¹ It is singularly inappropriate where the candidates are often of adult age, and when many of them have not received Baptism in the Church as infants, nor have any sponsors.

In the rubric which has now become the preface, the words 'ratify and confirm' were in 1549 'ratify and confess.' The substitution of the word 'confirm,' with its later adoption in the Question, is unfortunate as using the term of the candidates' confirming their baptismal promises when

¹ See p. 207.

the purpose of the service is for the candidates to be confirmed by God's grace at the bishop's prayer and imposition of hands.

Whether the baptismal vows have been openly accepted or not, their obligation is upon us. Having been baptized into the Christian Church, we are bound to live in conformity with its law of life, just as we are bound by the laws of the country in which we have been born, or in which we live; as indeed the fact of our being men and women subjects us to the laws of human nature. Any such laws—natural, civil, spiritual—we can recognise more clearly than in the past, we can set ourselves to fulfil them better, but we cannot take them upon ourselves.

It is worth pointing out that the Order of Baptism excludes the idea that personal responsibility begins with Confirmation. In the concluding exhortation godparents are bidden to remember that it is their parts and duties to see that the 'infant be taught, *so soon as he shall be able to learn*, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he hath here made by you.'

Amongst the sectarian bodies generally 'joining the Church' is regarded as a voluntary act, extremely desirable, but not essential. The Church is thought of as a voluntary society, organised

from below, with which individual Christian men and women do well to associate themselves, according to their preference, for mutual help and service. Baptism is supposed in some way to affect the soul's relation to God, or at least to be a token of the person being in covenant with Him. But this is thought of as constituting a purely individual relationship, except so far, perhaps, as an 'invisible Church' may be concerned. The individual disciple is free, as his conscience prompts him, to join a Church. Very different from this is the teaching of the Prayer Book and of Holy Scripture.¹ There

¹ *E.g.* 1 Cor. xii. 13, Rom. xii. 5, Eph. iv. 4, Col. iii. 15.

Reference may here be made to the sermon on 'Individualism and Catholicism,' by Archbishop Temple, already quoted in the first volume of this series (*Religion*, p. 231):—'Men were not brought to Christ and then determined that they would live in a community. Men were not brought to Christ to believe in Him and His Cross, and to recognise the duty of worshipping the Heavenly Father in His Name, and then decided that it would be a great help to their religion that they should join one another in that worship, and should be united in the bonds of fellowship for that purpose. In the New Testament, on the contrary, the Kingdom of Heaven is already in existence, and men are invited into it. The Church takes its origin, not in the will of man, but in the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Similarly Dr. Satterlee, Bishop of Washington, writes in his *New Testament Churchmanship* (p. 123): 'Observe that [the Kingdom of Heaven or the Church] was an organism, not an organisation. This distinction is never to be lost sight of. An organisation is a federation formed by men; an organism is a body endued with the power of life, and created by God.'

See also Dr. Bright's *Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life*, pp. 8, 9.

we are taught that by Baptism we *are joined to* the Church, not to this or that particular congregation, but to the Holy Catholic Church, the mystical Body of Christ, the blessed company of all faithful people. It is impossible after Baptism to 'join the Church.' We are members thereof, and as such we are bound to live in obedience to her fundamental laws, which are represented and expressed in the baptismal vows of Renunciation of evil, Belief of God's revealed truth, and Obedience to His commandments. Within the Church, as members of the Christian society, we may go on to higher privileges than those conferred at our first initiation, and receive further spiritual gifts, as in Confirmation and Holy Communion, and on such terms as the Body under her Head and guided by His Spirit, lays down. That a further spiritual gift is looked for in Confirmation, and that it is not merely or chiefly a public profession of allegiance, is shown by the direction of the rubric at the end of the office for the Baptism of those of riper years, who would have just made their vows: 'It is expedient that every person thus baptized should be confirmed by the bishop so soon after his Baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion.' Something more will be said on the subject of the renewal of

vows at Confirmation when we come to consider the proper preparation for its reception. The true nature of Confirmation we can now consider, concluding our rejection of the popular misconception in the words of Dr. Plumptre: 'Of what may be called the modern, Protestant idea of Confirmation, as the ratification by the baptized child, when he has attained an age capable of deliberate choice, of the promises made for him by his sponsors, there is not the slightest trace in Christian antiquity.'¹

Note.—The following extract from the address of the Bishop of Pennsylvania (Dr. Whitaker) to his Diocesan Convention (May 1899) will illustrate what was said at the beginning of the chapter:—

'Knowledge and understanding there must be, according to the age and ability of the candidate. Ordinarily that which is set forth in the address after Baptism is the minimum to be required, and the general description contained in the words "and is sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism" should be adapted to the capacity and circumstances of the individual, the effort being always to secure the highest possible attainment in knowledge and in earnestness of purpose. Moreover, the instruction given to candidates for Confirmation should have regard not merely to personal fitness, but should enforce the fact of membership in the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and all the obligations which follow from that

¹ *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, 'Confirmation.'

relationship: such as the duty of maintaining the Church, of supporting missions, of obedience to the laws of the Church, and of the fulfilment of duty in all the relations they sustain. Especially should candidates who have been brought up under a different system from ours be instructed in the fundamental principles and practical methods of the Church into which they are to be received. The importance of such instruction becomes more evident when we consider how large a part of those confirmed come from the Christian bodies around us.

‘In the past twelve years there have been confirmed in this diocese 32,311 persons, of whom 1078 were confirmed by other bishops, and 31,233 by me. I have endeavoured to ascertain the religious antecedents of all whom I have confirmed, and most of the clergy have taken pains to obtain the information.

‘The whole number of those whose religious antecedents have been reported to me is 23,757.

‘Of these, 14,388 were brought up in our own Church, or had been for a considerable part of their lives under the influence of its teaching; 2265 had sustained similar relations to the Methodists; 1796 to the Presbyterians; 1170 to the Lutherans; 992 to the Baptists; 695 to the Roman Catholics; 573 to the Church of England; 443 to the Friends; 145 to the German Reformed; 107 to the Congregationalists; 86 to the Reformed; 84 to the Reformed Episcopalians; 52 to the Church of Ireland; 51 to the French Protestants; 50 to the Unitarians; 48 to the Moravians; 27 to the Universalists; 27 to the Jewish Church; 14 to the Swedenborgians; 12 to the Anabaptists; 11 to the United Brethren; 10 to the Mennonites; 10 to

the Evangelical Lutherans; 8 to the Scotch Church; 8 to the Independents; 7 to the Church of Sweden; 6 to the Covenanters; 5 to the English Independents; 5 to the Christians; 3 to the Danish Church; 3 to the Syrian; 2 to the Canadian Church; 2 to the Greek Church; 1 to the Mormons; 1 to the Salvation Army; 1 to the Nestorians; 1 to the Disciples of Christ; 1 to the Unitas Fratrum; 1 to the Spiritualists; 1 to the Dunkards.

‘In addition to these 8 were Chinese, 94 were Indians, and 522 had no religious antecedents of parentage or of previous connection with any religious organisation.

‘Comparing these statistics it appears that of the 23,757 confirmed whose religious antecedents were reported, 1 of every 11 came from the Methodists; 1 of every 15 from the Presbyterians; 1 of every 20 from the Lutherans; 1 of every 24 from the Baptists; 1 of every 40 had received no religious training, and 1 out of 33 came from the Roman Catholics. This last does not include those who came to us from the Roman Catholic Church as communicants and were received as such without being confirmed. Adding to these the smaller number coming from other sources, it is found that about two-fifths of our candidates for Confirmation have been brought up without knowledge of all that is distinctive and peculiar to this Church. It cannot be expected that such as these will become assimilated and homogeneous without careful instruction continued at least until the first principles of all that a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul’s health shall have become understood, and heartily accepted.’

CHAPTER II

THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH'S RITE WITH THE LAYING ON OF HANDS BY THE APOSTLES

It is plain that in the Prayer Book the rite of Confirmation is treated as identical with the Laying on of hands by the apostles. In the collect following the Imposition of hands the bishop prays for those 'upon whom, *after the example of thy holy Apostles*, we have now laid our hands.' Canon lx. of the English Canons of 1603, which lays down the rule that every bishop shall administer Confirmation at his visitation of the diocese in every third year, begins thus: 'Forasmuch as it hath been a solemn, ancient, and laudable custom in the Church of God, *continued from the apostles' times*, that all bishops should lay their hands upon children baptized and instructed in the catechism of the Christian religion, praying over and blessing them, which we commonly call *Confirmation*.'

The account of the apostles S. Peter and S. John

going to Samaria to lay their hands on those whom Philip the deacon had baptized, 'that they might receive the Holy Ghost,' given in Acts viii. 14-17, is appointed as a lesson to be read at the beginning of the Order of Confirmation in the American Prayer Book (1892). Though the reading of the lesson is optional, the choice of this passage (beside which no other is provided) marks the Church's claim to the identity of her rite with that administered by the apostles:—

'Then the bishop, or some minister appointed by him, may say, Hear the words of the Evangelist Saint Luke, in the eighth chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

'When the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.'

It will be observed that, whatever the exact nature of the gift of the Holy Ghost here bestowed, the sacramental principle of the communication of an inward and spiritual grace by means of an outward

and visible sign is stated here, in Holy Scripture, in the plainest, one might almost say the baldest, terms.

This principle, moreover, it should be noted, of outward signs accompanying and giving notice, as it were, of the bestowal of spiritual gifts, is sanctioned at the very commencement of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, when on the day of Pentecost outward signs, appealing both to the ear and to the eye, accompanied the promised bestowal of the Holy Spirit from the ascended Lord to His disciples. ‘Suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind . . . and there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder like as of fire . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.’¹

So Hooker says: ‘Christ and His Holy Spirit with all their blessed effects, though entering into the soul of man we are not able to apprehend or express how, do notwithstanding give notice of the times when they use to make their access, because it pleaseth Almighty God to communicate by sensible means those blessings which are incomprehensible.’²

To the objection that no miraculous gifts follow

¹ Acts ii. 2-4.

² *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. lvii. [3].

the Laying on of hands by the bishop, the reply is simple. The extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost vouchsafed to the Church in the apostles' days were granted for a special purpose, to introduce and sanction the new religion, which when once fairly established would not need these or such evidences of its truth¹. The fact that Christianity had overcome the difficulties in its way, and still more the moral and spiritual victories wrought in transforming the lives of its disciples, would be the best and strongest evidence of its divine origin and character. As the need of them passed away, the extraordinary and external manifestations of the Spirit's presence were withdrawn. They had served their purpose, and were withdrawn as *ordinary* accompaniments of His presence. Doubtless we may look for similar special signs when similar needs demand them. But His gifts of internal grace to illuminate and sanctify the mind and heart are as much needed now as then. These gifts accordingly are mercifully continued in the Church, and the means of conferring them remain the same, the ministry of those whom our Lord commissions to act in His name. 'The Fathers,' says Hooker, 'held Confirmation as an ordinance *always profitable* in God's Church, although not always accompanied with equal largeness of those effects which gave it countenance at

¹ See Bp. Moule, *Veni Creator*, pp. 214, 215.

the first.’¹ S. Augustine’s words may be quoted as an illustration of this distinction made by the Fathers. ‘In the first days,’ he says, ‘the Spirit of God was wont to fall on all believers, and they used to speak with tongues which they had not learned, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Such signs were suitable for the time. It was fitting that a sign of the Holy Ghost should be given in all languages, because the Gospel of God was about to run its course through all languages over the whole world. That sign was given and passed away. At the present time is it expected of any of those on whom the hand is laid that they may receive the Holy Ghost, that they should speak with tongues? Or when we laid our hands on yonder candidates, did you each look to see whether they spoke with tongues? And was there any of you so perverse as to say when you saw they did not speak with tongues: “These have not received the Holy Ghost, for if they had received Him they would speak with tongues as was the case in those days?”’² The argument of S. Augustine, it may be remarked, is equally valid, whatever view be taken of the nature of the gift of tongues; whether it were an ecstatic utterance, or a more permanent endowment for missionary purposes.

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. lxvi. [4]. ² *Tract. in Joann.*, vi. iii. 10.

The distinction between ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and their continuance in the Church as they are respectively needed, is well drawn out by Dr. Newman:—

‘By a priest, in a Christian sense, is meant an appointed channel by which the peculiar Gospel blessings are conveyed to mankind, one who has power to apply to individuals those gifts which Christ has promised us generally as the fruit of His mediation. This power was possessed by the apostles: I am now to show that it is possessed by their successors.

‘Now, first, that there is a strong line of distinction between the apostles and other Christian ministers, I readily grant; nay, rather I would maintain it to be so clearly marked that there is no possibility of confusing together those respects in which they resemble with those in which they differ from their brethren. The apostles were not only ministers of Christ, but first founders of His Church; and their gifts and offices, so far forth as they had reference to this part of their commission, doubtless were but occasional and extraordinary, and ended with themselves. They were organs of revelation, inspired teachers, in some respects infallible, gifted with divers tongues, workers of miracles; and none but they are such. The dura-

tion of any gift depends upon the need which it supplies; that which has answered its purpose ends, that which is still necessary is graciously continued. Such at least seems to be the rule of a Merciful Providence. Therefore it is, that the Christian ministry still includes in it the office of teaching, for education is necessary for every soul born into the world; and the office of governing, for “decency and order” are still necessary for the quiet and union of the Christian brotherhood. And, for the same reason, it is natural at first sight to suppose that the office of applying the gifts of grace should be continued also, while there is guilt to be washed away, sinners to be reconciled, believers to be strengthened, matured, comforted.¹

Note.—‘It is commonly said, by those who reject the rite of Confirmation, that the Laying on of hands was to procure the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, and that it ceased with the lives of the apostles. But this ought to be proved, as well as said. It is the very point in dispute, and no one has a right to assume it. Besides, I have proved from S. Paul, that Laying on of hands is among the fundamental principles of Christianity; equally so with Baptism, and therefore must be common to all Christians. [Heb. vi. 2. See p. 23.] That miraculous gifts were sometimes conferred

¹ J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, vol. II. Sermon xxv. ‘The Christian Ministry.’

in Confirmation, is readily allowed. That they were always conferred, even when Confirmation was administered by the original apostles, does not appear. The gifts of the Spirit are various, depending, both in kind and degree, on the good pleasure of God. While miraculous gifts were necessary for the propagation and establishment of our holy religion, God graciously gave them: when they had answered His purpose, He withdrew them. And it is just as good an argument against the present necessity of Christ's religion in the world, that the miraculous powers which attended its first publication have ceased; as it is against Confirmation, that the miraculous gifts, which, in many cases, attended its first ministration, continue no longer. The operations of the Holy Spirit are not confined to miraculous powers. If they were, where miraculous gifts are not, there the Holy Spirit cannot be. His gifts and graces are necessary for the sanctification of the heart, and for all the purposes of holy living; and as necessary now as ever they were. We have, therefore, a right to conclude, that God gives them now, as well as He formerly did; and by the same means too. For God is the same now that He formerly was, and His religion the same it was in the time of the first apostles.

' We know that many of the first preachers of Christianity were endowed with various miraculous gifts, and that those gifts have ceased. Ought preaching to be laid aside because the miraculous gifts which attended the first preachers have been withdrawn? If not, why should Confirmation be laid aside because the miraculous gifts which sometimes accompanied its original administration no longer subsist? When the truth of Christ's religion had been established by

miracles, and the Holy Scripture completed by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, God saw best to withdraw both those gifts, and to leave His Church to His written word for the rule of its faith and practice. And to that word I appeal for the doctrine of Confirmation, or Laying on of hands. There we find it, among the first principles of our holy religion. He that hath eyes to see, let him see; and I pray God to give him a heart to understand, and a will to obey.'—Bishop Seabury's *Sermons*, vol. i., pp. 132, 133.

CHAPTER III

THE MODE OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF CONFIRMATION BY THE LAYING ON OF HANDS OR BY ANOINTING

So far as the mode of administering Confirmation is concerned, there can be no doubt that the English Church follows most closely 'the example of the Apostles.' In both the passages in the Acts of the Apostles (ch. viii. and ch. xix.) where the rite is described, the apostles *lay their hands* on those who have been baptized, that they may receive the Holy Ghost. This outward sign of blessing came to be the title by which the ordinance was known, as 'the breaking of the bread,' the ceremony which all could see, was a common name for the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood.¹

It is not meant that the term, the Laying on of hands, always denotes Confirmation. It is used also for Ordination (2 Tim. i. 6; Acts vi. 6; 1 Tim.

¹ Acts ii. 42, 46; xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16.

iv. 14), and apparently for Absolution (1 Tim. v. 22), as well as in healing the sick (S. Mark xvi. 18). The Laying on of hands is 'a symbolical act, in its origin similar to the symbolical acts of the prophets of the Old Covenant, appropriate to the invoking of blessing from on high, emphasising and making yet more solemn the prayer which it accompanies.'¹

In Hebrews vi. Baptism and the Laying on of hands are reckoned among the first principles, the A B C as we might say, of Christian instruction. Along with the great fundamental truths of resurrection and future judgment, and the great fundamental dispositions or states of mind of repentance and faith, are reckoned the initiatory rites of Baptism and Laying on of hands or Confirmation.²

The position given to the Laying on of hands in the Epistle to the Hebrews amongst these rudimentary principles (1) certainly seems to disprove

¹ Dr. Sanday, *The Conception of Priesthood in the Early Church and in the Church of England*, p. 57.

² See Westcott on Hebrews vi. 2. 'The progress in the subjects of teaching is significant. It reaches from the first scene of the Christian life to the last, as it is made known to us. The two types of divine ordinances [*Baptism, Laying on of hands*] correspond broadly to the two characteristics of the Christian's temper already noticed. The first marks the passage from an old state to a new (the gift of life by the action of the Holy Spirit); the second, the arming for the fulfilment of the new service (the endowment for the work of life by the gift of the Holy Spirit).'

the explanation given of it as intended for the bestowal merely of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as marked the apostolic age. These S. Paul distinctly valued at a lower estimate than moral qualities. (2) It must awaken in thoughtful minds serious misgivings as to probable or possible loss from the neglect of an apostolic ordinance, whether on the part of individuals or of Christian organisations.

There is no evidence that any other ceremony beside the Imposition of hands was used by the apostles. The reference both by S. John and by S. Paul to the anointing of the Spirit is probably to be understood of the inner spiritual effect of His grace rather than of an external, symbolical rite of anointing.

So Bishop Westcott writes¹:—‘The outward symbol of the Old Testament—the sacred oil—is used to signify the gift of the Spirit from the Holy One which is the characteristic endowment of Christians. This gift is referred to a definite time (ver. 27); and the narrative of the Acts fixes this

¹ On 1 S. John ii. 20. Compare Dr. Bright, *Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life*, p. 105: ‘References in Scripture to the Spirit’s action under the figure of “anointing” would naturally suggest to the next century the use of Chrism in this rite. It could not then be foreseen that the supplementary ceremony would ultimately go far to efface the original outward sign.’

normally at the Imposition of hands which followed on Baptism (Acts viii. 14, etc.). But the context shows that the word *χρίσμα* [unction] is not to be understood of the material sign, but of the corresponding spiritual reality. There is not indeed any evidence to show that "the chrism" was used at Confirmation in the first age. Perhaps, as has been suggested, S. John's language here may have tended to fix the custom, which represented the communication of the divine grace in an outward rite.'

In 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, the four words should be noted which are used of the gift of the Holy Ghost bestowed in Confirmation: *βεβαιῶν*, 'stablisheth' (*i.e.* confirms); *χρίσας*, 'anointed'; *σφραγισάμενος*, 'sealed'; *τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ Πνεύματος*, 'the earnest of the Spirit.' As in 1 S. John ii. 20, 27, the tense of 'anointed,' 'sealed,' 'gave,' points to a definite time, as at Confirmation. The terms 'sealed' and 'earnest of the Spirit' are found in the same connection in Ephesians i. 13, 14; comp. iv. 30.

At a very early period, however, Unction was added to the Imposition of hands. The first mention of Unction is found in Tertullian (A.D. 198). He speaks of it as a settled custom in his time; but the anointing of which he speaks seems to be linked with Baptism, and to precede the gift of the Holy

Ghost, which is connected with the Laying on of hands¹:—

‘After this coming out from the bath [that is, the font for Baptism by immersion] we are anointed thoroughly with a blessed Unction. . . . Next to this, the hand is laid upon us, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit, through the blessing.’²

With this passage may be compared another from a later treatise of Tertullian,³ where he emphasises the sacramental principle of spiritual gifts accompanying external signs: ‘The flesh is washed, that the soul may be cleansed from stain; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed (with the cross), that the soul may be guarded; the flesh is overshadowed by the laying on of the hand, that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit; the flesh is fed with the

¹ Such a use of Unction in connection with Baptism was retained in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. (1549), while its use was discontinued in connection with the Laying on of hands in Confirmation.

The priest was directed to anoint the newly baptized infant upon the forehead, saying: ‘Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath regenerate thee by water and the Holy Ghost, and hath given unto thee remission of all thy sins: He vouchsafe to anoint thee with the Unction of His Holy Spirit, and bring thee to the inheritance of everlasting life. Amen.’

² *De Baptismo*, 7, 8 (Oxford translation, p. 260).

³ *De Resurrectione Carnis*, 8 (Ante-Nicene Library, vol. xv. pp. 229, 230).

Body and Blood of Christ, that the soul may be nourished from God.'

S. Cyprian, also in North Africa, half a century later, likewise speaks of an anointing following Baptism:—

‘Anointed also must he of necessity be who is baptized, that having received the Chrism, that is, Unction, he may be the anointed of God, and have within him the grace of Christ.’¹

In the East anointing generally followed on bathing. It was natural that the holy washing or baptism for a religious purpose should be followed by a similar unction, and that the physical effects of both the bath and the unction should be regarded as symbolical of the spiritual meaning of the corresponding religious rites. The idea suggested by unction, to those familiar with its use in the Old Testament, would be that of *consecration* (Gen. xxviii. 18; Ex. xl. 9; 1 Kings xix. 16; 1 Sam. xvi. 13), and more particularly of *consecration to a priesthood* (Ex. xxix. 4, 7; Lev. xiv. 8, 9, 17, 18). In both the consecration of the ministerial priesthood, and in the restoration of a former leper to his position in the priestly people, the unction follows a baptism. So in the Christian Church we are made ‘a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacri-

¹ *Epistle* lxx. 3 (Oxford translation, p. 234).

fices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.’¹ Accordingly S. Augustine writes:—

‘No one among the faithful, I suppose, doubts that the priesthood of the Jews was a figure of the royal priesthood that was to be—the priesthood which is in the Church—to which all are consecrated who belong to the Body of Christ, the supreme and true High Priest. For now all are also anointed, which in those days was done only to kings and priests; and when Peter, writing to the Christian people, speaks of “a royal priesthood,” he makes it plain that that people are suitably described by both the titles to which the Unction was appropriated.’²

In another epistle, in speaking of the gift of the Holy Ghost as completing and perfecting the gift of Baptism, Cyprian connects it wholly with the Laying on of hands. Referring to Acts viii. he says: ‘Inasmuch as they [the Samaritans who had been baptized by Philip the deacon whom the apostles had sent] had obtained the legitimate Baptism of the Church, it was not fitting that they should be baptized again; but only what was lacking was done by Peter and John, namely, that prayer being made for them, with Laying on of hands, the Holy

¹ 1 S. Pet. ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6.

Quaest. Evang. II. xl. 3. See Mason, *The Relation of Baptism to Confirmation*, p. 86.

Spirit should be invoked and poured upon them. Which now also is done among us, those baptized in the Church being brought to the bishops of the Church, and by our prayer and Laying on of hands they receive the Holy Ghost and are perfected with the seal of the Lord.¹

S. Augustine speaks both of the Imposition of hands and of Unction in connection with the gift of the Holy Ghost. ‘The disciples prayed that the Holy Ghost might come on those on whom they laid their hands; they did not themselves give the Holy Ghost. This custom the Church still preserves in her chief officers. Accordingly Simon Magus, when he offered the apostles money, did not say, Give me too this power, that I may give the Holy Ghost, but that upon whomsoever I lay hands he may receive the Holy Ghost. . . . Wherefore also even the Lord Jesus Himself not only gave the Holy Ghost as God, but also as man received Him. Whence He is said to be filled with grace and with the Holy Ghost (S. John i. 14); and more plainly it is said in the Acts of the Apostles that God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost (x. 38). Not with visible oil, but with the gift of grace which is signified by the visible Unction with which the Church anoints the baptized. . . . He received the

¹ *Epistle lxxiii.* 8 (Oxford translation, p. 248).

Holy Ghost as man, as God He poured forth the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 32). We according to our measure can receive this gift; but to pour it forth upon others is beyond our power. That this may be done, we pray over them to God, by whom it is accomplished.’¹

S. Augustine strenuously repudiates any idea of a magical rite, or of an apostle or bishop himself bestowing the Holy Spirit. Any such thought is of course wholly foreign to the Church’s mind. The touch of the bishop’s hand no more communicates the Holy Spirit, than does the water at Baptism cleanse the inner life. In both cases, and in similar rites such as Ordination, the outward sign is accompanied with prayer for the spiritual grace. In the same sense Hooker says²:—

‘Our means to obtain the graces which God doth bestow are our prayers. Our prayers to that intent are available as well for others as for ourselves. To pray for others is *to bless* them for whom we pray, because prayer procureth the blessing of God upon them, especially the prayer of such as God either most respecteth for their piety and zeal that way, or else regardeth for that their place and calling bindeth them above others unto this duty, as it doth both natural and spiritual fathers. With prayers

¹ *De Trinitate*, xv. xxvi.

² *Eccles. Pol.* v. lxvi.

of spiritual and personal benediction the manner hath been in all ages to use *imposition of hands*, as a ceremony betokening our *restrained desires* to the party whom we present unto God by prayer.¹

In the same sense Bishop Jeremy Taylor writes :

“The bishop’s laying his hands on the people, what is it but the solemnity of prayer over them ?” said S. Austin ; that is, a prayer made by those sacred persons who by Christ are appointed to pray for them, and to bless in His Name : and so indeed are all the ministries of the Church, Baptism, Consecration of the Blessed Eucharist, Absolution, Ordination, Visitation of the Sick ; they are all *in genere orationis*, they are nothing but solemn and appointed “prayer” by an entrusted and a gracious person, specificated by a proper order to the end of the blessing then designed.²

In later times the Unction came to be regarded as the distinctive outward sign in Confirmation, the Imposition of hands being merely an elevation of the bishop’s hands in an attitude of prayer and benediction over the candidates kneeling before him.

The so-called Pontifical of Egbert, Archbishop

¹ See Gen. xlviii. 14 ; Num. xxvii. 18 ; 2 Kings v. 11 ; S. Matt. ix. 18, xix. 13 ; S. Mark xvi. 18.

² *Discourse of Confirmation*, sect. v.

of York (tenth century), shows us how Confirmation was administered in that period.¹ The prayer for the sevenfold gift of the Spirit, was that of our present Prayer Book,² with the addition, 'Sign him with the sign of Thy holy cross unto eternal life.' Then the bishop put the Chrism on the forehead of the candidate in the form of a cross, saying, 'Receive the sign of the holy cross, by the Chrism of salvation, in Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' Other prayers followed, but no distinct Laying on of hands. It probably accompanied, or was intended to accompany, the signing on the forehead, the hand being laid on the head, while the thumb traced the cross with oil on the forehead.

In the Sarum rite,³ instead of the sentence 'Receive the sign,' etc., the bishop said, '*N.* I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' The concluding collect, while pleading the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, and God's

¹ Blunt's *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 252.

² This prayer is contained in the Gelasian Sacramentary of the seventh or eighth century. Many of the prayers contained in it are much older. The rubric bids the bishop lay his hands on the candidates.—Wilson, *The Gelasian Sacramentary*, xvii. 86 sq. *Answer of the Archbishops of England to Pope Leo XIII.*, p. 17; and Mason, p. 247.

³ Maskell, *Monumenta Ritualia* (1882), vol. i. pp. 38 sq.

will that the gift should through them be handed on in the Church, has no mention of the Laying on of hands, but asks that the Holy Spirit may make their hearts His temples, whose foreheads have been anointed and signed.

The office in the present Roman Pontifical¹ is practically the same with that of Sarum; but the bishop is also directed to give each person confirmed a light blow or tap on the cheek, saying, 'Peace be with thee.'²

To bring the Latin rite into correspondence with the apostolic practice, it may be urged that the outstretching of the hands over those to be confirmed is a sufficient Imposition of hands; or that the sign is complied with in the touch of the thumb in the anointing on the forehead, or by the slap on the cheek (which, however, is a comparatively

¹ Revised under Pope Benedict XIV. in 1752.

² Durandus explains this ritual act thus: 'First, that he may have the clearer remembrance that he has received this Sacrament; secondly, because this Sacrament is given to the baptized for the strengthening of his faith, that henceforth he may never be ashamed to confess Christ before any.'

Maskell says this explanation is open to some doubt, although admitted into the [Tridentine] Catechism; and that the 'alapa,' which is the term used for the slight touch given by the bishop upon the cheek, more probably is to be connected with the words spoken at the same moment, *Pax vobis*; and to be regarded as a substitute for the Kiss of peace, girls and women being among the number of those confirmed.—*Mon. Rit.* i. p. 40.

modern ceremony). The first plea seems to have the most authority, and in itself to be the more reasonable; but the *Catholic Dictionary* adopts the second.¹

At the English Reformation there was in this, as in other matters, an endeavour to return to primitive and scriptural rule. Accordingly, in the First English Prayer Book (1549) the direct Imposition of hands is restored and emphasised.² The bishop was bidden 'cross each on the forehead and lay his hand upon the head of every child, saying, *N.* I sign thee with the sign of the cross and lay my hand upon thee, In the Name,' etc.³ In the collect following the Laying on of the hands (the same which we now have), the laying on of the bishop's hands after the example of the holy apostles is mentioned instead of the anointing and signing as the external part of the rite. The prayer immediately preceding the Laying on of hands asks for the spiritual reality symbolised both by the sign of the cross, which was retained, and by

¹ By Addis and Arnold, pp. 209, 210. This is probably true in so far that anciently the bishop laid his hand on the head of the candidate, while with his thumb he traced the sign of the cross upon the forehead.

² Keeling, *Liturgiae Britannicae, or The Several Editions of the Book of Common Prayer.*

³ On the giving of the name at Confirmation, see Note B at end of the chapter.

the anointing, which was dropped. 'Sign them (O Lord) and mark them to be Thine for ever, by the virtue of Thy holy cross and passion. Confirm and strengthen them with the inward Unction of Thy Holy Ghost, mercifully unto everlasting life. Amen.' The tap on the cheek was omitted, but the salutation, 'The peace of the Lord abide with you,' was retained, for which is now substituted, 'The Lord be with you'; the answer in both cases being 'And with thy spirit.' Strangely enough, it was not until 1662 that the Lord's Prayer formed part of the office.

In 1552 both the sign of the cross and the prayer referring to it and to the Unction of the Spirit were omitted; and the present sentence of Confirmation was substituted for that given above, the bishop laying his hand upon the head of every one severally, saying, 'Defend, O Lord, this Thy child with Thy heavenly grace; that he may continue Thine for ever; and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto Thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.'

Thus, as in the administration of Baptism, edifying accompanying ceremonies were lost because they had to a great extent obscured the central and simple 'sign' of unquestioned authority.

A Canon (No. xl. § 5) adopted by the Church in

Scotland in 1890, sanctioned the use of the sign of the cross, which had before been customary in some of the dioceses.

‘The bishop when administering Confirmation may at his discretion, with the concurrence of the clergyman, use the following form in addition to that prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer :

“N. I sign thee with the sign of the cross [*here the bishop shall sign the person with the sign of the cross on the forehead*], and I lay my hands upon thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Defend, O Lord,” etc., as in the Book of Common Prayer.’

The question naturally arises, How is Confirmation administered without the Laying on of hands to be regarded? It is a very practical question in many parts, where a considerable number of persons brought up in the Roman Church seek to be admitted to our communion. Is their Confirmation to be recognised? Or are they to be confirmed again on the ground that they have received no Laying on of hands?

Against this latter position two considerations seem conclusive:—(1) the long and general disuse of actual Imposition of hands in both Eastern and Western Christendom; (2) the fact on which stress is laid in the Anglican formularies that no outward

sign is expressly ordained by our Lord for the lesser sacramental ordinances such as Absolution and Confirmation.¹

While we should be truly thankful to have recovered for ourselves the security of an exact following of apostolic practice, the former of these considerations would make it rash, and the second inconsistent with our declarations, to treat as invalid Roman or Eastern Confirmations because they are conferred with Unction rather than by Imposition of hands.

¹ Thirty-nine Articles, Art. xxv. The section of the Article concerning 'those five commonly called Sacraments' is awkwardly worded. Confirmation can hardly be described as 'a corrupt following of the apostles,' or as 'a state of life.' But it is clear from a comparison of the Article with the Homilies that the ground on which Confirmation is not counted for 'a Sacrament of the Gospel' is that, like Absolution, it has not 'any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.'

The Homily *Of Common Prayers and Sacraments*: 'As for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a Sacrament, namely, for the visible signs, expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin, and of our holiness and joining in Christ, there be but two; namely, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. For although Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin, yet by the express word of the New Testament it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands. For this visible sign (I mean laying on of hands) is not expressly commanded in the New Testament to be used in Absolution, as the visible signs in Baptism and the Lord's Supper are: and therefore Absolution is no such Sacrament as Baptism and the Communion are.'

In their *Answer to the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII.* (1897) the Archbishops of England say, 'The matter of Confirmation [*i.e.* its outward sign] is not so entirely certain; and we at any rate do not at all think that Christians who have different opinions on the subject should be condemned by one another.' (Sections ix. and x.)

At the Savoy Conference, before the last revision of the English Prayer Book, the Puritans stated their objections to the Order of Confirmation: 'We desire that the practice of the Apostles may not be alleged as a ground of this Imposition of hands for the Confirmation of children, both because the apostles did never use it in that case, as also because the Articles of the Church of England declare it to be a "corrupt imitation of the apostles' practice" (Art. xxv.). We desire that the Imposition of hands may not be made, as here it is, a sign to certify children of God's grace and favour towards them; because this seems to speak of it as a Sacrament, and is contrary to that forementioned 25th Article, which saith that "Confirmation hath no visible sign appointed by God."'

To this the bishops replied: 'Prayer after the Imposition of hands is grounded upon the practice of the apostles (Heb. vi. 2 and Acts viii. 17); nor doth 25th Article say that Confirmation is a corrupt

imitation of the apostles' practice, but that the five commonly called Sacraments have ground partly of the corrupt following the apostles, etc., which may be applied to some other of these five, but cannot be applied to Confirmation, unless we make the Church speak contradictions.'¹

Note A.—‘There seems good evidence that in the English Church the Laying on of hands was never dropped. In the seventh century we find Bishop Cuthbert in the North of England, “laying his hand on the head of each one.” In the eighth century Bede mentions this without qualification: “He ministered the grace of the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands on those who had just been regenerated in Christ” (*Life of S. Cuthbert*, xxxii. ed. Giles, vol. iv. p. 308). A manuscript service book of the Church of England written in the eleventh century (preserved in the library of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge) expressly directs the bishop to lay hands on each candidate. Two centuries after, Wiclif refers to Confirmation in a manner which implies (or has been held to imply) that Laying on of hands was the practice in his day. Two hundred years later “the King’s Book” in 1543 shows the same: “The holy fathers of the primitive Church, taking occasion and founding themselves upon the said acts and deeds of the apostles . . . did use and observe (as it hath been hitherto by succession of ages continued) that all Christian people should, after their Baptism, be presented to their bishops, to the intent that by their prayers and imposition of their hands upon . . . they should be con-

¹ Cardwell, *Conferences*, pp. 329, 359.

firmed." In 1549 the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. directs that the bishop should "lay his hand upon their heads," and this is continued to the present day among us.—Dr. Kingdon, Bishop of Fredericton, *God Incarnate*, The Bishop Paddock Lectures, 1890, pp. 236, 237.

Note B.—In Maskell's *Monumenta Ritualia* there is a discussion of a question sometimes raised as to the right of a person to change at Confirmation the name given at Baptism. In the old rubric the bishop was directed to ask the name of the candidate for Confirmation, and then anoint him, saying, 'N. I sign thee with the sign of the cross, etc.' If an objectionable or unseemly name was given, the bishop had the power to give another. A provincial constitution of Archbishop Peckham [1281] lays down, 'Attendant etiam sacerdotes, ne lasciva nomina . . . imponi permittant parvulis baptizandis, sexus præcipue faeminini. Si contrarium fiat, per confirmantes episcopos corrigatur' ('Let priests take care that names which carry a lascivious sound be not given to children at their Baptism, especially to those of the female sex; if they be, let them be altered by the bishops at Confirmation'), *i.e.* as Lyndwood explains, 'mutando nomen, et honestius nomen imponendo' (by changing the name and giving one more seemly). In the present Order of Confirmation it is not directed that the bishop should pronounce the name of the candidate; and this has been urged (as in Burn's *Ecclesiastical Law*) as an argument against the continuance of the bishop's authority to change a name at Confirmation. But the decision of Lord Coke, supported by all the judges, in the case of Sir Francis Gawdie, that a bishop might so change a name, was

given when the practice of addressing the person by name at Confirmation was already discontinued. Moreover, evidence exists that such changes were from time to time made in a formal manner and with the highest legal sanction. Nevertheless, the canon law only contemplated the change of a name given in Baptism if it was improper or objectionable.—

Mon. Rit. I. cclx.-cclxiv.

CHAPTER IV

THE MINISTER OF CONFIRMATION

CONCERNING the Minister of Confirmation our position is likewise secure. In Holy Scripture its administration is evidently reserved to the apostles (Acts viii.). Its restriction to bishops has been the general rule in the West, in spite of permissions given to priests in special cases to confirm. The letters of Gregory the Great (A.D. 593) on which this claim for the Pope to grant such authority is founded¹ are in some respects obscure. But while in a particular case he seems to allow the Eastern usage of presbyters confirming with Chrism consecrated by the bishop, elsewhere he speaks of the bishops going on Confirmation tours 'to seal the newly baptized.'² A letter attributed, perhaps wrongly, to Pope Innocent I. (A.D. 402-417) is evidence both of the practice and of the teaching

¹ As in the *Catholic Dictionary*.

² See note at the end of chapter.

of the Western Church in the writer's day, and is important as witnessing to the custom of priests, anointing the baptized with Chrism consecrated by the bishop, which was a distinct rite from the bishop's anointing on the forehead, probably with the laying on of his hand, for Confirmation and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

‘Concerning the sealing of the newly baptized, it is manifest that it is not lawful to be done by any other than the bishop. For presbyters, although they are priests of the second order, yet have not the mitre of the high-priesthood. That this high-priestly office belongs only to the bishops, either to seal or to transmit the Comforter Spirit, is proved not only by Church usage, but also by that passage of the Acts of the Apostles, which asserts that both Peter and John were sent to transmit the Holy Ghost to persons already baptized. For presbyters, whether without the bishop, or in the presence of the bishop, are allowed, when they baptize, to anoint the baptized with the Chrism, but with Chrism which has been consecrated by the bishop; they are not allowed, however, to seal the forehead with that oil; this belongs only to the bishops, when they transmit the Comforter Spirit.’¹

¹ *Ep.* xxv. See Mason, p. 181.

The general Eastern teaching¹ about Confirmation is that its outward part consists of Unction with Chrism consecrated by a bishop. The disuse of Imposition of hands is perhaps connected with the administration of Confirmation by presbyters, the Imposition being regarded as belonging to the apostolic office. As the accompanying ceremony of the anointing, which was performed by the priest, came to be regarded as the more important feature, perhaps in part because its symbolism was more apparent to all, the need of an episcopal ministrant of the rite was lost sight of; but the priests in most cases have not adopted the Imposition of hands. Thus in time both the immediate intervention of the bishop and the scriptural sign were generally dropt in Eastern Confirmations.

While it is not laid down that Confirmation is as exclusively the prerogative of the Episcopate as the transmission of the ministry in Ordination, the English Church, following primitive and apostolic rule, allows of no Confirmation save by bishops.²

¹ A useful classification of the different Eastern communions was given in *The Guardian* for 2nd November 1898.

² This rule obliges us to exclude the Confirmations of German Lutherans, among whom the rite is administered by the ordinary pastor; while at the same time the gift of the Holy Ghost therein is ignored. 'Its principal features are the catechetical exercises, the confession, and the vow, and its purpose a new-kindled devo-

Apart from the question of essential prerogative, there are obvious advantages in this arrangement, by which each of the faithful is brought into contact, if only on this one occasion, with the chief pastor of the diocese, and his initiation into the Christian society sanctioned and ratified by its representative officer in that district. Everything is valuable which helps to free us from the narrowness of congregational or parochial life, and to emphasise our fellowship in a larger body.¹

The question of the minister of Confirmation is fully discussed in Bishop Jeremy Taylor's *Discourse of Confirmation*.² 'The bishops,' he says, 'were always and the only ministers of Confirmation. This was the constant practice and doctrine of the Primitive Church, and derived from the practice and tradition of the apostles, and recorded in the Acts written by S. Luke. For this is our great rule in this case, what they did in rituals and consigned to posterity is our example and warranty; we see it done thus, and by these men, and by no others, and no otherwise, and we have no other

tion.'—See *The Lutheran Manual*, by Junius B. Remensnyder, D.D. (3rd edition, 1893), p. 95 and p. 63.

¹ In very large dioceses the employment of suffragan bishops may be unavoidable. They will be understood, however, in every ministration to represent their respective diocesans.

² Χρίσις τελειωτική ['the perfecting unction'], section iv.

authority, and we have no reason to go another way.'

Bishop Beveridge of S. Asaph, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, may be regarded as a typical Anglican divine. In the first of his series of sermons on the Church (which were apparently preached at Ordinations in his cathedral church) he says, after referring to Acts viii. and xix.: 'Hence the Catholic Church, in all ages, hath not only retained this apostolical rite, which we now call Confirmation, but hath always esteemed it an essential part of the apostolical office, and therefore to be performed by none but the apostles themselves, and their successors, to the end of the world. And, therefore, it was the ancient and constant custom of the Primitive Church, as it is ours, for the bishop of every diocese to go into the lesser cities and villages belonging to him, and there lay his hands upon those who were baptized by priests or deacons, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, as we learn from S. Jerome himself: whose words are, "Non abnuo hanc esse ecclesiarum consuetudinem, ut ad eos qui minoribus urbibus per presbyteros et diaconos baptizati sunt, episcopus ad invocationem Sancti Spiritus manum impositurus excurrat" ["I do not deny that it is the practice of the Churches in the case of those who,

living far from the greater towns, have been baptized by presbyters and deacons, for the bishop to visit them, and by the Laying on of hands to invoke the Holy Ghost upon them.”¹

‘And therefore how any bishops in our days dare neglect so considerable a part of their office, I know not; but fear they will have no good account to give of it, when they come to stand before our Lord’s tribunal.’²

Note.—In September 593, S. Gregory writes to Januarius of Cagliari (*Epp.* iv. 9), ‘Let not bishops presume twice to sign infants at Baptism [*baptizandos*] on their foreheads with the Chrism; but let the presbyters anoint them at Baptism [*baptizandos*] on the breast, that so the bishops may afterwards have to anoint them on the forehead.’ In May 594 he writes to him again [*ib.* 26]: ‘It has reached us that some have been offended because we forbade presbyters to touch the *baptizandi* with the Chrism. For our part, indeed, we did according to the long standing usage of our Church; but if it be true that some are distressed about the matter, we allow that, where bishops cannot be had, presbyters also are to touch the *baptizandi* on their foreheads with the Chrism.’

There is no convenient English equivalent for *baptizandi*, which is the true reading throughout both passages; but it is equivalent to βαπτίζόμενοι, and refers to those who are

¹ *Dialogue against the Luciferians*, 9 (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. vi. p. 324).

² Bishop Beveridge’s *Works* (ed. Horne), vol. ii. p. 95.

in process of initiation by Baptism, without regard to their exact status at any particular moment in the process.

S. Gregory expresses himself with some obscurity, and it is not quite clear what is the exact usage he is criticising; but it is sufficiently obvious that in the former letter he is merely enforcing the established usage of the Roman rite (which still prevails), as described in the letter attributed to S. Innocent I., and quoted in the text above (p. 43); viz. that the baptizing presbyter is indeed to anoint the newly baptized with Chrism consecrated by a bishop, but not on the forehead; while the confirming bishop is to administer the Chrism on the forehead. In the second letter he modifies the rule, and, where a bishop is inaccessible, authorises the Sardinian presbyters to administer the Chrism on the forehead; in other words to confirm, as Eastern presbyters confirm. The general disallowance of this in the West is a matter of discipline, which can be dispensed with by authority; and in fact, in the two Italian dioceses which are administered by the abbats of Monte Cassino and La Cava respectively, these prelates, though only presbyters, administer Confirmation, of course with Chrism consecrated by a bishop.

CHAPTER V

THE GIFT OF CONFIRMATION AND ITS RELATION TO THAT OF BAPTISM

A MORE difficult question than any of those already discussed is encountered when we ask what is the exact gift bestowed in Confirmation, and what is its relation to the grace of Baptism. Does Confirmation confer a fuller gift of the indwelling Spirit first bestowed in Baptism, or is His indwelling presence the distinctive and characteristic gift of Confirmation? An answer to the question, in itself not very simple, is made more difficult by the fact that in the earliest times, both apostolic and those next succeeding, Baptism and Confirmation were usually administered together (if a bishop were present), or in close connection one with the other. The Water, the Anointing, the Imposition of hands are continually spoken of as three rites belonging to the whole Sacrament of Baptism, the word Sacrament being

sometimes used (in a wider sense) of each of these ceremonies. For example, S. Augustine relates the case of a child who died unbaptized and was brought back to life to be baptized: 'Immediately his mother took him to the presbyters. He was baptized; he was sanctified; he was anointed; the hand was laid upon him. When all the Sacraments were accomplished he was taken.'¹ Thus it is often hard to decide whether scriptural or patristic language about Baptism ought to be understood of the sacred washing alone or of the initiatory rites of the washing and the sealing, Baptism and Confirmation, thought of in conjunction one with another, and almost as two parts or stages of one process of admission to the spiritual Body.²

The question as to the distinctive gift of Confirmation is a point discussed among those who hold the sacramental character of the rite, and look for a real gift of grace to be conferred therein. It is agreed by all that in Confirmation a special gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed, and that when in the New Testament the gift of the Holy Ghost is spoken of as a distinct gift, the means of conferring

¹ *Serm.* cccxxiv.

² 'Confirmation is continually treated in early writings as one of the baptismal rites; and Baptism is spoken of as including in its spiritual effects that which it only includes inasmuch as it comprises also Confirmation' (Mason, p. 1).

this gift is the Laying on of hands.¹ It is likewise agreed by all that the baptismal cleansing is by the Spirit's power, that the forgiveness of sins is His gift, or (more strictly) the gift of God, through and in Jesus Christ, by the operation of the Spirit.² In Baptism we are born anew or from above, of water, the outward element, and the Spirit, the inner agent.³ In Baptism we are joined to the mystical Body of Christ, made to share in His sacred and perfected Humanity;⁴ the question in debate is whether the Holy Spirit of God, Who fills this glorified manhood of Christ, immediately takes up His abode within those who are made members of Christ; or does He in Baptism act upon them as it were from without for their cleansing, reserving for the further rite of Confirmation the gift of His indwelling presence?

Before we examine the words of Apostles or Fathers upon the subject, let us try to have some clear idea of what is meant by the Spirit of God taking up His abode in the spirit of man.

The Holy Ghost is that Person of the Triune Godhead Who comes, we may say, nearest to us, by Whom God brings us into most intimate fellowship with Himself. In God we all live and move and

¹ Acts viii. 14-19, xix. 6.

² I Cor. vi. 11.

³ S. John iii. 3-8.

⁴ Gal. iii. 27; Rom. vi. 3-11.

have our being.¹ On Him Who alone has life in Himself all His creatures depend, not only for first calling them into existence, but for continually upholding them in being. He is 'the Creator and Preserver of all.'² Our natural powers and faculties of body, mind, and soul, however they may be used, are moment by moment sustained in being by God. In order that we may use these powers aright we need the *inner* help of God both to teach and to strengthen us, that we may both perceive and know what things we ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.³ This help God gives in measure to all men by His Spirit. In man's unfallen condition the Spirit of God acted freely on man's conscience and will. Man lived in fellowship with God. By his disobedience man withdrew from this fellowship, and thereby forfeited the free and full help of God's Spirit for his illumination and sanctification. By degrees he became more and more alienated from God, as self-pleasing and self-will ruled his life, taking the place of God's guidance. Moreover, evil habits were formed, the will becoming less and

¹ Acts xvii. 28. The author may be allowed to refer to a treatment of this subject in his lecture on 'A Personal God' in *Reasonable Faith*, four sermons on fundamental Christian doctrines.

² Prayer for all conditions of men.

³ Collect for the First Sunday after the Epiphany.

less able to resist the suggestions of man's lower appetites or of hostile spirits who sought his ruin. Thus man's nature fell into disorder (this is what we mean by the Fall), deprived, by his own disobedience, of the continual control of God's Spirit. Without this harmonising power his nature was swayed and torn by distracting and contrary impulses. God's Spirit did not cease to act upon man, but owing to his perverted moral condition the guidance of the Spirit of God ceased to be the dominant influence in determining man's conduct. Man became less sensitive to the appeals of truth, and less ready to rise up to their demands. This was the case with the mass of mankind. But among God's chosen people, who were under His special training, and outside these limits, there were those who to a greater degree surrendered themselves to the Spirit's teaching. These in the technical or in a wider sense became prophets of God, telling forth in word or life His mind and will as it was brought home to them by His Spirit.¹

¹ See Gibson on *The Thirty-nine Articles*, vol. ii. p. 366. 'In view of modern theories of development, it may be added that there is nothing whatever in Holy Scripture to make us think that man was in his unfallen condition *perfect*. Innocent he is distinctly represented as being. His state is one of primitive simplicity. But this is all. Nor is there anything in the Biblical account to lead us to imagine that he was in a high state of civilisation or of

‘ [Wisdom] being one, hath power to do all things ;
 And remaining in herself, reneweth all things :
 And from generation to generation passing into holy
 souls
 She maketh *men* friends of God and prophets.’¹

In the fulness of time the Word of God, Who by His Spirit had revealed God in the hearts of men, became incarnate;² He assumed, that is, man’s nature, that He might at once (1) by acting out God’s character in our circumstances give us a twofold revelation, clearer than had been yet vouchsafed, of what God is and of what man should be; and (2) by meeting and conquering the temptations to which man is subject might restore our nature to its true order and dignity. To this end He assumed our nature by the Spirit’s power of the Virgin’s substance.³ The Manhood thus assumed was from the first moment of its existence, in its every movement, fashioned and governed by

intellectual greatness. Scripture gives no countenance to the view that “an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam”; and more than one of the early Fathers denies that Adam was created “perfect” (τέλειος).³

¹ Wisdom of Solomon, vii. 27 : comp. 2 S. Peter i. 21.

² S. John i. 1-14.

³ Concerning the Virgin-birth of our Lord, its importance and significance, reference may be made to Gore’s *Dissertations on Subjects connected with the Incarnation*, and to the essay appended to the present writer’s meditations on *The Virgin Mother*.

the Spirit of God.¹ The Spirit of God permeated the Humanity of our Lord, Who was indeed 'the Christ,' anointed with the fulness of the Spirit of God. This Unction of the Spirit was continually manifested by the Son of Man throughout His earthly life, as in every action and suffering He corresponded with the impulses of the Spirit of God.²

Of this restored and perfected human nature we are made partakers in the Church, as we are baptized into Christ and made members of His mystical Body. The Spirit which controls that renewed manhood is intended in increasing measure to subdue in us all that is contrary to His holiness and truth, taking possession of and ruling all our faculties.³ This is 'the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,' of which the hymn of the Apostolic Church sings.⁴

¹ S. John i. 22, 33, iii. 34; Acts ii. 33, 36, x. 38.

² The perfection of absolute flawlessness developed through the discipline of suffering and trial into the perfection of triumphant obedience, of matured sanctity (S. Luke ii. 40, 52; Heb. ii. 10, v. 8, 9). The author may refer to his Baldwin Lectures, *Christ's Temptation and Ours*, pp. 18-21.

³ There remains in us after Baptism what never had place in our Lord, the *φρόνημα σαρκός*, or taint of the Fall, a disorder of the old Adam to be gradually overcome.

⁴ Titus iii. 4-7. For the hymns of the Apostolic Church imbedded in the New Testament, see Liddon's *Bampton Lectures*, vi. pp. 332, 333; and *Lauda Sion* (New York Church Club Lectures, 1896), pp. 51-53.

As in our Lord's Humanity the Spirit fashioned it from the first, and yet was poured out upon it in fresh and fuller measure or for new purposes,¹ at or in connection with His Baptism,² so we may believe it is with ourselves.³ At our Baptism, as we are born anew of water and the Spirit, we gain a fellowship with the Spirit of God more close than is enjoyed outside the Christian covenant. In Confirmation He pledges a fuller bestowal of His grace, not only for cleansing but for strengthening, to guide us into all truth, by the positive inspiration and quickening of our faculties. Thus we are to be sealed by the Spirit of God, God's character of truth and love and purity being impressed upon

¹ In particular for the accomplishment of His Ministry, on which at His Baptism He entered. See S. Luke iv. 18, and the references to the Acts given above. The fulness of the Spirit's gift seems to have been reserved for the Ascension. The slain and risen Humanity was capable of receiving the gift in fuller measure than before. This was its glorification (Acts ii. 33-36; S. Matt. xxviii. 18; S. John xii. 23, 24, xvii. 1, 2).

² According to S. Luke it was after He was baptized, as He was praying (iii. 21).

³ In a similar and perhaps parallel fashion there were stages in the communication of the Spirit by our Lord to His disciples, on Easter Day and at Pentecost (S. John xx. 22; Acts i. 5, 8, ii. 4). So Bishop Westcott, on the first of these passages, says: 'The presence of this new life of humanity in the disciples communicated to them by Christ was the necessary condition for the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. . . . The relation of the paschal to the pentecostal gift is therefore the relation of quickening to endowing.'

us, as we yield ourselves to the inspiration and control of His Spirit. This sealing by the Spirit of God is not by external compulsion or restraint put upon our faculties, but from within by His illumination and quickening of our mind and heart and conscience and will.¹

The words of a Spanish bishop of the middle of the seventh century (Hildefonsus of Toledo) may be quoted as illustrating and enforcing this truth. He has been speaking of Confirmation (with Unction) following Baptism, and then goes on: 'So with this Holy Chrism the man is outwardly anointed, and inwardly the power of the Holy Ghost falls upon him, so that as the whole man has been purified by the Laver, the whole man may be enriched by the Unction of the Spirit, the soul receiving power from that Unction of the Holy Spirit to know God as its indweller, to love Him Whom it has received into itself, to be with Him always, to be governed by Him and do His will; never to grieve Him, because the man has been

¹ 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30; 2 S. Peter i. 4. The title 'seal' applied to Confirmation seems to have been used both (1) of the external ratification by the Chief Pastor of the disciple's initiation into the Christian society at Baptism; and also (2) of the internal spiritual effect which should result from the operation of the Spirit thus bestowed. It was also applied to the sign of the cross. See Chapter xii.

sealed with Him on the day of his redemption; to be among the members of Christ one with Christ, inasmuch as he is vitalised and governed by the Spirit of Christ.' It should be noted that while Hildefonsus, like others, speaks of the Unction in Confirmation, this is not to the exclusion of the Laying on of the hand, which probably accompanied the anointing, and of which he goes on to speak as an imitation of our Lord's own action: 'The effect of this action is that when the words of blessing are uttered, the Spirit is poured upon the person; when he is touched with the hand, the energy of spiritual power is symbolised.'¹

We ought not to think of the grace of God which is pledged to us in Sacraments² as if all that belonged to each Sacrament were bestowed at the time of the reception of the rite. Rather a new relationship between the soul and God is then established, a new channel of communication opened, and He pledges Himself henceforth continually to bestow, as it were along these lines, the gift thus promised, as we seek it. The baptismal

¹ *De cognitione Baptismi*, quoted by Mason, pp. 211, 212.

² We do not say that God's grace is never given, even in the same degree, outside the Christian covenant as within. God is not tied to use none other than His ordinary channels of communication. But apart from these 'pledges' we have not the assurance and warrant that they give.

forgiveness of sins is not limited to the sins, whether original or actual, that preceded Baptism. The 'one Baptism for the remission of sins' admits us to a condition of acceptance with God in which the forgiveness of subsequent sins is on our repentance pledged.¹ We are to be continually and more and more raised out of the disorder of our fallen condition, the virtue of our Lord's sanctified Humanity increasingly hallowing and renewing our nature. So in Confirmation we are made partakers of the Holy Ghost. His aid is henceforth pledged in fuller degree; it is at our disposal as we call it forth.² We are thus to grow into a realisation not only of what has been done for us by sacramental gifts, but of the grace that is now offered and pledged to us who have received these means of grace.

In the scriptural records of the apostles' Laying on of hands the gift of the Holy Ghost is clearly stated to be the spiritual effect of their ministration. No statement could be plainer or simpler than that of Acts viii. 15, 17. Philip, the deacon and evangelist, had won many of the Samaritans

¹ On Baptism as the ground of subsequent forgiveness, see Bishop Pearson, *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. x.

² 2 Tim. i. 6. This refers directly to the gift of the Spirit bestowed in Ordination.

to belief in our Lord Jesus Christ, and had baptized them. The apostles hearing of this sent two of their own number, Peter and John, 'who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.'

The idea that the gift thus bestowed was merely that of working miracles or speaking with tongues has been already dealt with.¹

It seems clear that the gift of the Spirit of God here spoken of is the same that was bestowed on the day of Pentecost. The apostles had been before this believers in the Lord, and had been in a very real sense united to His sacred Humanity by their reception of the Sacrament of His Body and Blood at its institution. But it was not till the day of Pentecost that they received 'the promise of the Father' and were 'baptized with the Holy Ghost.'² This same gift they called forth upon the Samaritan converts. These had been baptized into the Body of Christ; they were now to receive the Spirit of Christ.

Similar and supplementary is the record of

¹ Chapter ii.

² Acts i. 4. 5.

S. Paul's ministration in Acts xix. 1-6. At Ephesus he found certain disciples whose imperfect intelligence concerning the Christian faith seems to have led him to put to them the question, 'Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism.'

It was clear that these men were not, strictly speaking, Christians at all. They had received preliminary teaching concerning our Lord from some of the Forerunner's disciples, and had received the preliminary baptism which he administered. The apostle explained the difference between this and Christian Baptism.

'Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after Him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.'

It is to be noticed here that S. Paul supplements the administration of legitimate Christian Baptism by the Laying on of hands, and that to

the latter rite is attributed (as in the earlier case of SS. Peter and John) the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is here, as on the day of Pentecost, manifested by outward signs of the Spirit's presence.

Both these passages seem without doubt to tell of 'a gift of a new kind, and not merely of a new activity of a presence already received.'¹

The acts of these representative apostles (Peter and John of the original Twelve, and Paul, who had received his apostolic commission as well as his apostolic endowment from the ascended Lord) seem to make clear the ordinary and normal ministration of the apostolic body, in obedience (we may at least reasonably infer) to instructions given by our Lord during the forty days in which He was 'speaking' to them 'the things concerning the kingdom of God.'²

The case of Cornelius presents the same distinction between Baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, though with this twofold peculiarity: (1) that the Holy Spirit was bestowed immediately from heaven without the ministration of the apostle; and (2) that the gift preceded instead of following Baptism. This variation from the ordinary mode of the divine bestowal was apparently intended to make clear to Peter and to the apostolic

¹ Rev. F. W. Puller.

² Acts i. 3.

body the divine intention that Gentiles equally with Jews should be admitted to the Body of Christ, with all its privileges and graces.

‘While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ’ (Acts x. 44-48).

In S. Peter’s defence of his conduct he expressly says that ‘the Holy Ghost fell on them, even as on us at the beginning,’ adding, ‘And I remembered the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. If then God gave unto them the like gift as He did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?’ (Acts xi. 15-17).

In the light of these plain statements of apostolic practice are to be understood spoken or written words of apostles, which might be capable of

different interpretations. It may not be forcing S. Peter's words in his pentecostal sermon to see in them a distinction between the characteristic gift of Baptism and that which would ordinarily be bestowed by the Laying on of hands: 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost' (Acts ii. 38).

A group of passages in the Epistles of S. Paul, which speak of the sealing of the Spirit (2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30) will be considered later.¹ But it is clear that 'the seal' (whether understood of an outward rite or of an inward gift of the Spirit) was conferred (1) at a definite time, and (2) in connection with the initiation of converts into the Christian society, and (3) that it was something distinct from the washing (symbolical or spiritual) of Baptism.

In the light of Acts viii. and xix. a similar distinction may fairly be recognised in 1 Cor. xii. 13, where it is said, 'In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . . and were all made to drink of one Spirit.' S. Paul is treating of the variety of gifts bestowed by the one Spirit according to the varying needs and vocations of Christians. It is

¹ Chapter xii.

natural to suppose that he has in mind the pentecostal symbolism of the one fiery flame from heaven dividing itself into many streamlets to light upon the heads of the disciples severally.¹ The different members of the Body of Christ, joined to Him in Baptism, are in Confirmation endowed with gifts of the quickening Spirit according to their several needs. Galatians iv. 6 may probably be interpreted in the same way: 'Because ye are sons [adopted as such in Baptism], God sent forth [in Confirmation] the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.'

Among patristic writers we may first refer to S. Irenaeus, the disciple of S. Polycarp, who was the pupil of S. John. Irenaeus, coming from Asia to Gaul, represents both Eastern and Western thought and practice. Discussing the backwardness and want of spirituality in the Corinthians, for which S. Paul reproves them (1 Cor. iii.), he supposes, no doubt mistakenly,² that they had not received the Holy Ghost, and this he attributes to the apostle's not having laid his hand upon them, 'for' (he says) 'on whomsoever they laid hands, they received the Holy Ghost, which is the meat of life' (in contrast with the 'milk' with which S. Paul

¹ Acts ii. 3.

² See 1 Cor. iii. 16, vi. 19, xii.-xiv.

said he fed them).¹ The passage is important: (*a*) as showing the Imposition of hands to be the means whereby the Holy Ghost was bestowed; (*b*) as attributing the gift of the Spirit not to Baptism but to Confirmation; (*c*) for its high estimate of this gift, which seems entirely incompatible with the idea of its being either for the exercise of miraculous powers, or as a mere endowment for active Christian work. This would not suit the expression 'the meat of life.'

In something of the same way S. Augustine distinguishes (with evident reference to the distinct gifts of Baptism and of Confirmation) between being 'born of the Spirit' and 'feeding on the Spirit.' To be born of the Spirit, he says, is to receive remission of sins. This first gift leads on to further gifts of the Spirit. It is bestowed that we may receive Him, by Whom we are cleansed in receiving pardon, to dwell in us for doing, for increasing, for perfecting righteousness.² So in a sermon to the newly baptized, whom he is instructing concerning the Holy Communion, S. Augustine, comparing the Bread which we receive with the Bread which we are (1 Cor. x. 16, 17), says, 'When you were exorcised,

¹ *Haer.* iv. lxiii. (Harvey's ed. vol. ii. 294. In Clark's Ante-Nicene Library, Bk. iv. ch. xxxviii. 2.)

² *Serm.* lxxi. 19, 33.

it was, so to speak, your being ground; when you were baptized, it was, so to speak, your being moistened; when you received the fire of the Holy Ghost, it was, so to speak, your being baked.¹ The Exorcism, the Baptism, and the Confirmation were three distinct rites, each having its spiritual effect, in their initiation into the Christian Church. In the same North African Church this distinction had been earlier emphasised by Tertullian and by Cyprian. Tertullian's treatise on Baptism has been already quoted for its reference to the Chrism and the Imposition of hands. This is what he says about the relation of Baptism to Confirmation: 'Not that we obtain the Holy Spirit in the baptismal waters; but having been cleansed in the water under the ministry of the angel, we are then prepared for the Holy Spirit.'² 'The hand is laid upon us in benediction, inviting and invoking the Holy Spirit . . . then that most holy Spirit comes down willingly from the Father upon the bodies which have been cleansed and blessed.'³

Similar is the teaching of S. Cyprian: 'A man is not born again through the Imposition of the hand, when he receives the Holy Spirit, but in

¹ *Serm.* cclxxii.

² *De Baptismo*, 6 (Clark's Ante-Nicene Library, vol. xi. pp. 238, 239). Tertullian refers of course to S. John v. 4.

³ *Ibid.* 8.

Baptism, so that having been already born he may receive the Spirit.’¹

And again he says that ‘one who getting rid of his sins in Baptism has been sanctified, and spiritually fashioned afresh into a new man, is thereby made fit to receive the Holy Ghost.’² It is perfectly plain that S. Cyprian is here speaking of the two rites of Baptism and Confirmation, for his argument is against those who accepted the Baptism of heretics but rejected their Confirmation. He regarded both as valueless. It is also to be noted that while S. Cyprian clearly attributes the gift of the Spirit to Confirmation, yet he with equal clearness recognises His presence and operation in Baptism. Urging the inconsistency of the line taken by his opponents, ‘the water alone,’ he says, ‘cannot wash away sins and sanctify a man [which is the distinctive gift of the Font], but only when accompanied by the Holy Spirit. So let them allow either that the Holy Spirit is there, where they say that Baptism is, or that there is no Baptism where the Spirit is not, for there can be no Baptism without the Spirit.’

The history of Novatian at about the same time shows that the same distinction between Baptism and

¹ *Ep.* lxxiv. 5 (7 in Oxford translation).

² *Ibid.* 6 (Oxford translation).

Confirmation, and the characteristic gifts belonging to each, was recognised at Rome. Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, in a letter preserved by Eusebius, says that Novatian was privately baptized in sickness.¹ ‘When he recovered from the illness, he never obtained the remaining things which a man ought to partake of according to the Church rule, and was never sealed by the bishop. But never having obtained this, how could he have obtained the Holy Ghost?’ The doubt expressed by Cornelius as to the reality of Novatian’s Baptism—‘if indeed such an one can be said to have received [Baptism] at all’—refers not to the external circumstances of his clinical Baptism, but to his personal disposition for the rite (*τοιουῦτος*), shown by his subsequent career, and apparently by his being baptized under stress of fear while still under treatment for demoniacal possession.

In the extreme West (of that time) Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona (370), teaches in the same way: ‘These things [our regeneration] cannot be otherwise fulfilled, except by the Sacrament of the Laver and of the Chrism and of the Bishop. For by the Laver sins are purged, by the Chrism the Holy Ghost is poured upon us; and both these we

¹ *Eccles. Hist.* vi. xliii. 14, 15 (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, vol. i. p. 289). See note at the end of the chapter.

gain by the hand and mouth of the Bishop; and thus the whole man is born again and made new in Christ.¹

At Milan the great S. Ambrose (380) in his addresses to the newly baptized expounds the ceremonies through which they had passed. His own treatise, *De Mysteriis*, is imitated in the *De Sacramentis* by a later hand. In either series three ceremonies are spoken of (beside the symbolical washing of the feet) as belonging to the initiatory rites, and leading up to Holy Communion: (1) the Baptism; (2) the anointing by the bishop; (3) the sealing with the seven-fold Spirit. In connection with this third ceremony (which probably consisted in the simultaneous signing of the forehead with the cross in Unction and the Imposition of the hand) Ambrose says, 'Remember, therefore, that you received the spiritual seal; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and godliness, the Spirit of holy fear; and keep what you received. God the Father sealed you; Christ the Lord strengthened you, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in your hearts, as you have learned in the lesson from the apostle. Rich with these insignia, the people that have been washed proceed to the altar of

¹ *Serm. de Baptismo*, sect. vi. (Mason, p. 143).

Christ.’¹ ‘After the Font it remains for the perfecting to be done, when in response to the bishop’s invocation the Holy Ghost is poured upon you.’²

In perfect harmony with this teaching of the Western Church is that of the East, while marked by its own characteristics. As among Westerns, so among Easterns it will suffice to quote the words of a few of the more eminent and commonly recognised authorities.

There is a passage in Origen (A.D. 200) which illustrates the wider and the narrower use of the term ‘Baptism,’ sometimes to include the whole rite of initiation, and at others standing, as in our modern use, for the sacred washing alone. ‘In the Acts of the Apostles,’ he says, ‘through the Laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given in Baptism.’³ And a little further on, ‘the grace and revelation of the Holy Ghost was delivered through the Laying on of the hands of the Apostles *after* Baptism,’⁴ and the renovation which it effects. As Dr. Mason says, ‘These two sentences balance one another. What is said in the one to be given “in Baptism” is said in the

¹ *De Mysteriis*, vii. 42 (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. x. S. Ambrose, p. 322).

² *De Sacramentis*, III. ii. 8.

³ *De Principiis*, I. iii. 2 (Ante-Nicene Library, vol. x. p. 34).

⁴ *Ibid.* 7 (p. 39).

other to be given "after Baptism." It all depends upon the latitude allowed to that word.¹ In the same way Origen, commenting on the case of the Samaritans who had been baptized by Philip the deacon, speaks of them as still in process of being baptized when the apostles Peter and John, who were sent from Jerusalem to perfect Philip's work, laid their hands on them.²

S. Athanasius is in very close agreement with Origen. Commenting on the words of S. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, 'This only would I learn of you, did you receive the Spirit by works of law or by hearing of faith?' he asks, 'What Spirit had they received but the Holy Ghost given to those who believe and are³ being born again through the laver of regeneration?' And then he goes on to speak of the gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. 'From that time therefore also by the Laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given to those who were³ being born again.'⁴

A most interesting discovery has quite recently been made in a manuscript of the eleventh century of a collection of prayers for the use of an early

¹ Mason, p. 274.

² *Com. in Joann.* tom. vi. § 17 (Mason, pp. 275, 276).

³ ἀναγεννωμένοις. The same Greek word is used in both places.

⁴ *Ep. ad Serapion*, i. 4, 6.

Eastern bishop.¹ It claims to represent, in part at least, the work of Serapion, the Bishop of Thmuis in Egypt in the fourth century, the friend of S. Athanasius, to whom the latter addressed the treatise just quoted. Internal evidence supports the claim. Among the prayers are two which bear on our subject—for the administration of the oil in Baptism and of the Chrism in Confirmation. The benedictions mark plainly the distinct gifts looked for in the two rites. The anointing *before* Baptism is for the forgiveness of sins, healing and driving from soul, body, and spirit every work of sin and lawlessness or Satanic operation. The anointing *after* Baptism is for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that having been born again and made new through the laver of regeneration, the candidates may be made partakers of the gift of the Holy Spirit and secured by this seal may continue steadfast.

In his famous *Catechetical Lectures* delivered in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (A.D. 348), S. Cyril of Jerusalem attributes the gift of the Holy Ghost to the rite of anointing which followed the

¹ See a review in *The Guardian* for February 15, 1899. The collection of prayers has since been translated and published by the Bishop of Salisbury in 'Early Church Classics' (S.P.C.K.), *Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book*.

sacred washing. In the lectures addressed to those who had just been baptized, explaining the several rites in which they had taken part, S. Cyril says:—

‘Having been *baptized into Christ*, and *put on Christ*, ye have been made conformable to the Son of God; for God having *foreordained us unto adoption as sons*, made us *to be conformed to the Body of Christ’s glory*. Being therefore made *partakers of Christ*, ye are properly called *christs*, and of you God said, *Touch not My christs*, or anointed. Now ye were made *christs*, by receiving the emblem of the Holy Ghost; and all things were in a figure wrought in you, because ye are figures of Christ. He also bathed Himself in the river Jordan, and having imparted of the fragrance of His Godhead to the waters, He came up from them; and the Holy Ghost in substance lighted on Him, like resting upon like. In the same manner to you also, after you had come up from the pool of the sacred streams, was given the *Uction*, the emblem of that wherewith Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Ghost, of whom also the blessed Esaias, in his prophecy respecting Him, says in the person of the Lord, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach glad tidings to the poor.*’¹

¹ *Lecture xxi.*, the third on the Mysteries (Oxford translation, p. 267).

From the passages which have been given, and from many others which might be quoted, it is clear that when in early Christian writers the gift of the Holy Ghost is spoken of, this is attributed to the rites, whether of Unction, or of the Imposition of hands, or of both, which followed the actual washing or baptism. To the sacred washing were ascribed the forgiveness of sins, and incorporation into Christ—a new start, that is, in life as God's adopted child. It was not supposed that these gifts could be effected without the operation of the blessed Spirit of God. It is by Him that every spiritual gift is brought home to us. The forgiveness of sins and the new birth are by our Lord's words expressly connected with the Spirit's work. But the cleansing and the new birth were regarded as first gifts to be supplemented by a further gift of the Spirit's guiding and strengthening presence, so much greater and more intimate that in comparison the soul, till the bestowal of this new gift, was regarded as not having yet received the Holy Ghost.

Without unduly pressing the parallel, or venturing to say that Baptism and Confirmation are as closely allied as the two parts of the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, we may be helped to recognise the distinct bestowal through separate

means of spiritual gifts so intimately and normally connected as membership in the Body of Christ and partaking of His Spirit, by the analogy of the Communion of the Body of Christ and the Communion of His Blood in the Holy Eucharist. To be partaker of Christ's Body would seem to imply being partaker in some sense of His Blood. Yet the Bread and the Cup, each with its proper blessing, are given and received separately though in close connection. In like manner it would seem that Confirmation, or the seal of the Spirit, is intended to follow close upon Baptism, the washing of regeneration. The difficulty which we feel in giving its natural meaning to scriptural language, is due to the separation of Confirmation from Baptism. In early times the two rites were ordinarily administered together, or the first was perfected by the second at the earliest opportunity. The later theory of Confirmation as a bestowal of *additional* strength by the Holy Ghost to the soul in which He has already at Baptism taken up His abode, fits in with, if it did not originate in, the general severance of the two rites. This was partly owing to the prevalence of infant Baptism, which naturally became the rule in Christian countries, partly to the failure to increase the number of bishops in proportion to the spread of the Church. The idea

of a new gift of spiritual strength to meet the new dangers and responsibilities of developing maturity (true as it is to God's ordinary method of bestowing grace to meet our varying needs), so far as the inner gift of the rite of Confirmation is concerned, is an afterthought fitted to the practice of deferring Confirmation to years of discretion or later. This custom, whatever may be said for it on the ground of spiritual expediency,¹ certainly cannot claim scriptural or primitive authority, nor be allowed to determine the meaning of the rite or its characteristic gift.

That what is here represented as the primitive teaching on Confirmation has been generally obscured is not denied. That it is no novel teaching in the Anglican Church is proved by the quotations given from Bishop Jeremy Taylor's treatise, and by the following extract from Bishop Seabury's Catechism, which was widely used in America, and was an inheritance, like the explicit invocation of the Holy Spirit in the consecration of the Eucharist, from the Scottish Church :—

Q. Is not the Holy Ghost given us at our Baptism ?

A. In our water-Baptism, the Holy Ghost purifies and fits us to be a temple for Himself; and in Con-

¹ See Chapter vii., 'The Age for Confirmation.'

firmation He enters and takes possession of this temple.¹

A little earlier in the eighteenth century Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man, in his *Sacra Privata*, says:—

‘The effect and blessing of Confirmation is to convey the inestimable blessing of the Holy Spirit of God by prayer, and the Imposition of the hands of God’s minister, that He may dwell in you, and keep you from the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

‘Confirmation is the perfection of Baptism. The Holy Ghost descends invisibly upon such as are rightly prepared to receive such a blessing, as at the first He came visibly upon those that had been baptized.

¹ ‘A Catechism, designed as an explanation and enlargement of the Church Catechism: formerly recommended by the Bishops and Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New York; to which are added the omitted parts of the original Catechism of Bishop [George] Innes [of Brechin, 1778], as republished by Bishop Seabury’ [1791].—Bishop Whittingham’s edition (Baltimore, 1851), p. 51. For further teaching of Bishop Seabury on the subject see note at the end of this chapter. In the later American edition the above Question and Answer were omitted, but the following were retained:—

Q. For what end does the Holy Ghost take possession of Christians [in Confirmation]?

A. That He may be in them a principle of divine and spiritual life here, and of glorious immortality hereafter. ‘Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.’—Eph. i. 13, 14.

‘By Imposition of the hands of God’s minister, God takes, as it were, possession of you as His own peculiar creature; He sanctifies and consecrates you again to Himself, engages to keep you continually in His hand, and makes you partaker of the divine graces and virtues.’¹

The late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Benson) says:—‘No thread of Language and History is more distinct than that which connects Christ’s promise of the coming of the Paraclete to be an Indwelling Power in all His chosen ones, with the institute of the Laying on of hands by the apostles. Upon the Twelve He came with a visible Epiphany, as every analogy would expect. On Christians at large He came in this plainest simplicity. “I will send Him unto you. . . . They laid their hands on them. . . . He fell on them.” And ever after in the letters of the apostles, such is the frequency of verbal and phraseological allusion to the custom, that, as a scholar once remarked to me, “Confirmation seems more present to the earliest Christian habits of thought than Baptism itself.”’²

¹ *Sacra Privata* (Oxford edition, 1854, from the original manuscripts), p. 109.

² *The Seven Gifts*, ‘Primary Charge to the Diocese of Canterbury,’ 1885, p. 87.

The ordinary teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, as set forth in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, that 'to those who are baptized are imparted the gifts of the Holy Ghost,' while in Confirmation the person who has been baptized 'begins to be settled in firmness by the strength of a new virtue, and thus to become a perfect soldier of Christ,'¹ is felt to fall far short of the teaching of Holy Scripture and of the early Fathers of the Church as given above.

Dr. Mason, in an extremely interesting discussion, traces the steps by which this poorer idea of Confirmation, as a development and increase of a gift of the Spirit already received, became fastened on the Latin Church.² In an anonymous homily of a Gallican prelate of the fifth or sixth century, which was printed under the name of Eusebius of Emesa, it is said: 'The Holy Ghost came upon the waters of Baptism with His saving illapse, bestowing at the Font absolutely all that is needed to restore innocence; in Confirmation He grants a development [or further gift] for progress in grace (*in fonte plenitudinem tribuit ad innocentiam, in confirmatione*

¹ *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, ch. iii. qu. 1, 2, 5, Buckley's translation, pp. 196-199.

² *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism* (which is here freely quoted), section iii. pp. 415-421, and 195-200.

augmentum praestat ad gratiam) . . . in Baptism we are washed clean, after Baptism we are fortified.'

This homily was worked up in the Forged Decretals into a letter purporting to issue from the pen of Melchiades, Bishop of Rome at the time of Constantine's conversion, early in the fourth century. S. Thomas Aquinas was imposed upon, in this as in other cases, by the forgeries, and quoted the letter of Pope Melchiades in his treatment of Confirmation.¹ From Aquinas and his use of it 'the letter had supreme weight in the deliberations of the Council of Trent, and is more quoted than any other ancient document in that section of the Catechism of the Council of Trent which treats of Confirmation. It thus came to set the standard of doctrine on the subject to Latin Christianity, and extended its influence over many who, though not bound by the Tridentine decisions, yet pay deference to them.'

The expression of the homily quoted above, in which the benefit of Confirmation is described as an '*augmentum ad gratiam*,' that is, an additional gift for advance in grace, came to be understood as if it implied that as Baptism was the Sacrament of spiritual birth, so Confirmation was the Sacrament of growth. 'In this Sacrament' of Confirma-

¹ *Summa Theologiae*, part iii. qu. 72.

tion, Aquinas says, 'is given the fulness of the Holy Ghost for spiritual strength, which belongs to perfect age.' By it the soul new-born in Baptism was to rise at once from infancy into maturity of manhood.

But, as Dr. Mason says, 'Growth, in the natural world, is not the result of anything new and adventitious, except what comes in the way of support. The life begun in birth naturally asserts itself in growth, if only it be sustained with proper food. No third movement, distinct from generation on the one hand, and from nutrition on the other, needs to be imparted at a given moment in order to produce growth. . . . The Roman view of Confirmation as a Sacrament of growth does not suit the symbolism of a Sacrament given once for all. If Confirmation were a Sacrament given daily or at frequent intervals, beginning with the Baptism of the infant, and ceasing when the infant might be said to have attained its full spiritual stature, then Confirmation might be considered the Sacrament of growth, but not Confirmation as we understand it, administered without repetition, and imprinting upon the soul a "character" which can never be effaced.'

Far higher and fuller teaching is preserved generally in the Eastern Churches, as may be illustrated

by the words of the Russian Bishop Macarius :¹—
 ‘The principal invisible effect of the Sacrament of Unction is to impart to the faithful the Holy Ghost. In Baptism we are only purified and regenerated by the virtue of the Holy Spirit, but we are not yet fit to receive that Spirit in ourselves, and to become His temples. By the Unction He is imparted to us with all the gifts of His grace which are indispensable for the spiritual life.’

With Mason we may further quote as evidence of Eastern doctrine concerning Confirmation the Orthodox Confession drawn up by Peter Mogilas, Metropolitan of Kiew, and accepted by all the the Eastern Patriarchs in 1643:—‘These are the fruits of this mystery. First, that as by Baptism we are regenerated, so by the holy Unction we are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, being confirmed in the faith of the Lord, and grow in divine grace. Secondly, that by the power of the Holy Ghost we are made so firm and strong that our ghostly enemy can in no wise injure our souls.’²

One more extract, quoted by Bishop Kingdon from a Greek writer, may be given, which will well

¹ Bishop of Vinnitza, and Rector of the Ecclesiastical Academy of St. Petersburg (*Théologie Dogmatique Orthodoxe*, vol. iii. p. 410).

² Kimmel, *Libri Symbolici Ecclesiae Orientalis*, pp. 177, 178.

serve to sum up the general position taken in this chapter, and to link it with that which follows:—

‘Both these mysteries [Baptism and Confirmation] complete one perfect whole, and having been joined, as now, are fulfilled in the Church before the Liturgy. Both are the door into the Church of Christ and the Kingdom of God, and in consequence the commencement of the other mysteries.’¹

Note A.—The following extract from Bishop Seabury’s sermon on Confirmation, in a collection of sermons dedicated to the Episcopal Clergy of Connecticut and Rhode Island by their Diocesan, is important as showing the perfect agreement on this point with Tertullian and Cyprian of the first Bishop of the Anglican Communion in the United States of America.

‘Should it be objected, that by ascribing the gift of the Holy Ghost to Confirmation, He seems to be excluded from Baptism, I answer, that it has been observed, in a former discourse, that the gifts of the Holy Ghost are intended for different purposes; and that His operation or energy is always according to the purpose for which He is given. In *Baptism*, He is given for the purpose of regeneration—to effect that new birth by which we are born into the Church of Christ, obtain remission of all past sins, and a new nature: In *Confirmation*, He is given for the purpose of sanctification, or renovation of the heart in holiness. In Baptism, we are created anew in Christ Jesus, by the operation of the

¹ Χριστιανική Ἠθική καὶ Λειτουργική, by P. Rhompotes, Athens, 1869, p. 259 (Kingdon’s *Paddock Lectures*, p. 250).

Holy Ghost : In Confirmation, the new creation is animated, and enabled to live according to its new nature, by the energy of the same most holy Spirit. As in the original creation of man, God made the body first, and then breathed into it the breath of life, to animate the body which He had made, and enable it to answer the purposes for which He designed it ; so in our new creation, being buried with Christ in Baptism, we die to the former life of the old man, and rise again to a new life ; and, in Confirmation, the Holy Ghost, as the principle of that regenerated, new, or spiritual life, is infused into us from above. In Baptism, we are made Christians ; but yet the new-baptized is but an infant in Christ : In Confirmation, he is advanced to the rank of adults, and made a perfect man in Christ Jesus.’¹

Note B.—The following note is specially interesting as bearing a lucid testimony by an independent witness to the teaching of the early Church on the relation of Confirmation to Baptism.

‘Σφραγισθῆναι here means Confirmation or Consignation (as it was commonly called among the Latins) ; that is, the Imposition of the hands of the bishop which regularly followed Baptism, immediately if the bishop were on the ground, in other cases at as early a date as possible. The Imposition of hands was for the purpose of conveying the Holy Spirit, Who should supply the newly baptized Christian with the necessary grace to fit him for the Christian life. Confirmation was thus looked upon as completing the Baptism, and

¹ *Discourses on Several Subjects*, by Samuel Seabury, Bishop of Connecticut and Rhode Island, Discourse v. ‘Of Confirmation, or Laying on of hands,’ vol. i. p. 135.

as a necessary precondition of receiving the Eucharist. At the same time, if a person died after Baptism, before it was possible to receive Imposition of hands, the Baptism was not regarded as rendered invalid by the omission, for in the Baptism itself the full remission of sins was supposed to be granted. The Confirmation was not necessary for such remission, but was necessary for the bestowal of the requisite sustaining grace for the Christian life. Cornelius in the present paragraph does not intend to imply that regenerating grace was not given in Novatian's Baptism. He means simply that the Holy Spirit was not given in that full measure in which it was given by the Laying on of hands, and which was necessary for growth in grace and Christian living. The Baptism was looked on in ordinary cases as in a sense negative—effecting the washing away of sin, the Laying on of hands as positive, confirming the gift of the Spirit. The former, therefore, was sufficient to save the man who died immediately thereafter; the latter was necessary to sustain the man who still remained in the world.¹

Note C.—The subject of the relation of the gift of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation to the baptismal gift is in itself mysterious; and when such writers as Dr. Bright,² Dr. Wirgman,³ and Mr. Darwell Stone,⁴ are opposed to the view here taken, and upheld by Dr. Mason,⁵ Bishop Kingdon,⁶

¹ *The Church History of Eusebius*, with notes by Arthur Cushman M^cGiffert, vi. xliii. (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. i. p. 289).

² *Morality in Doctrine*.

³ *The Doctrine of Confirmation*.

⁴ *Holy Baptism*, a previous volume of this series.

⁵ *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*.

⁶ *God Incarnate*, the Paddock Lectures for 1890.

and Father Puller,¹ one would not wish to dogmatise.² This is not the place for a controversial treatment of arguments adduced by writers on the other side. But the author may be allowed to say that, after examination of the arguments, he is established in the conviction that, amid whatever apparent inconsistencies, early Christian writers, when they face the question of the characteristic gifts of Baptism and of Confirmation, attribute to the latter the gift of the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

¹ *What is the Distinctive Grace of Confirmation?* (This essay is unhappily out of print.)

² The question is ably discussed in articles in *The Church Quarterly Review* for October 1880, October 1886, April 1892, January 1898.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELATION OF CONFIRMATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

WHATEVER view be taken of the exact relation of the gift of the Holy Ghost bestowed in Confirmation to His regenerating operation in Baptism, all who recognise Confirmation as completing and perfecting the baptismal initiation into the Body of Christ will perceive the propriety at least of Confirmation preceding admission to Holy Communion. This is so reasonable and natural an arrangement that, were it not frequently set aside in practice by two different sets of people, it might seem unnecessary to enlarge upon the rule. The direction of the Prayer Book carries on the general rule of the Catholic Church :

‘There shall be none admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.’

To treat this last clause as if it implied that

readiness and desire for Confirmation in themselves constituted a ground for admission to Holy Communion is both unhistorical and, where the sacramental character of Confirmation is recognised, unreasonable. The clause is intended to provide for extraordinary cases—such as serious illness, or a long delay before Confirmation may be possible—where a person thus duly prepared may before the Laying on of hands be allowed to receive the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood.¹

To interpret the rule as applying only to those who have been baptized and trained in the Church (as 'a rule for her own children'), as if others, whose Baptism, if valid, is irregular, and whose teaching has been defective, were to be granted admission to the full privileges and the holiest mysteries of the Church with less preparation than

¹ 'This is exactly conformable to the practice of the Primitive Church, which always ordered that Confirmation should precede the Eucharist, except where there was extraordinary cause to the contrary: such as was the case of clerical Baptism, or the absence of a bishop, or the like; in which cases the Eucharist is allowed before Confirmation. The like provision is made by our own Provincial Constitutions, as well as the rubric which is now before us, which admit none to communicate, unless in danger of death, but such as are confirmed, or at least have a reasonable impediment for not being confirmed. And the glossary allows no impediment to be reasonable but the want of a bishop near the place.'—Wheatly, *Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*, ch. ix. *ad fin.*

those who have been trained in her ways, is so unreasonable a position that it would seem as if it could only have been suggested as a way of justifying a lax practice. Such a practice or theory necessarily implies a low esteem of Confirmation, as if it were a mere reception into an organisation of Christian people on a profession of earnest purpose, corresponding with such ceremonies as 'giving the right hand of fellowship' in some Protestant bodies. It implies, moreover, a rash disregard of the dangers of schism, in that persons who have received Baptism at the hands of a minister not deriving his authority and commission from the Church by any recognised channels of transmission are treated as if, without any formal act of reconciliation or sanction, they had a claim to receive the Eucharist, which, among its many aspects, is a pledge of unity and a token of fellowship in the Christian Society.¹

¹ Bishop John Wordsworth of Salisbury, in his history of *The Episcopate of Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews*, concludes a discussion of the question of lay or sectarian Baptism thus: 'The true policy of the Church, and the most consistent with antiquity, seems to me to be to make much of Confirmation as a perfecting of Baptism, and to be very clear and distinct in our teaching on this head. It is this view of Confirmation as an admission into the full privileges of the Catholic Church that makes it important to insist upon it in such cases as a condition preceding Holy Communion, according to the teaching of our Prayer Book' (p. 63). See also note at the end of the chapter.

Apart from the question of the validity of lay Baptism, such, alas, is the growing laxity in the administration of Baptism among the Protestant bodies generally, that a clergyman, in dealing with persons from amongst them, should in all cases take pains to inquire as to the fact and the character of the Baptism of each candidate before presenting him for Confirmation.

In a Charge, *Holy Baptism and the honour due it*, addressed to the clergy of his diocese (1896), the Bishop of Maryland (Dr. Paret) points out :

(1) That with great carefulness the Church of England, for the last three hundred years, has avoided making any decision as to the validity of lay Baptism, quoting the resolution of the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation in 1712, that ‘the validity of such Baptism is a point which the Catholic Church, and the Church of England in particular, hath hitherto avoided to determine by any synodical declaration.’¹

(2) He shows that, whatever view may be taken of the *validity* of Baptism administered by unauthorised persons, the Prayer Book insists upon ‘a lawful minister’ for its right performance.

(3) He gives instances to prove that among the Protestant denominations who in theory hold fast

¹ Cardwell, *Synodalia*, vol. II. xxxvi. p. 771.

to Baptism there prevails in its administration the very greatest carelessness or neglect, both as to the required matter and form. The Bishop says:—

‘As to this widespread carelessness in the act of Baptism, I have most abundant and most startling proof; proof so strong that I feel almost sure that in almost half the cases of what is called Baptism among the Protestant denominations [in the United States] outside of “this Church,” there is such essential defect, that if S. Paul were to make such investigation as he made at Ephesus, he would either, as he did there, command an immediate Baptism *de novo*, as if none had been administered, or at least the conditional Baptism which the Church has appointed for doubtful cases.’

Dr. Pusey thought conditional Baptism the wiser and safer course with regard to ‘persons baptized by such as are not only in schism, but never received any commission to baptize (a case to which there is no parallel in the early Church).’¹

Confirmation must not be repeated any more than Baptism. Like Baptism and Ordination, it is said to confer ‘character,’ a special stamp of the Spirit of God upon the soul. (The spiritual mark which the gift bestowed in Confirmation is *intended*

¹ See the end of his long note ‘Of the validity of heretical Baptism’ in the Oxford translation of Tertullian, p. 298.

increasingly to produce is considered in the chapter entitled 'The Seal of the Spirit.') Where a person's Baptism is considered uncertain, conditional Baptism should be administered before Confirmation. If, in any case, a doubt as to the Baptism should arise after Confirmation, sufficient to call for a conditional Baptism, Confirmation should be repeated, likewise conditionally, for an unbaptized person is incapable of receiving the gift of Confirmation.

It is a common practice at the present time in the Roman Catholic Church to give First Communion to children before they are confirmed; in some cases immediately before Confirmation, in others with a considerable interval between the two rites, in order to allow of further instruction. It is hard to comprehend such an inversion by those in authority of Catholic order and of spiritual reasonableness.¹ It is gratifying to know that a reform of this abuse, and a return to the better

¹ Archbishop Peckham's Constitutions (Lambeth, 1231) show that this abuse, of Communion before or without Confirmation, is of long standing, though formerly checked by authority:—

'Many neglect the Sacrament of Confirmation for want of watchful advisers; so that there are many, innumerable many, who want the grace of Confirmation, though grown old in evil days. To cure this damnable neglect, we ordain that none be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood that is not confirmed, except at the point of death, unless he have a reasonable impediment.'—Johnson, *English Canons*, vol. ii. pp. 277, 278.

traditions of the Church, is urged by eminent Roman ecclesiastics, including the highest.

A correspondent writes as follows in *The Guardian*, August 18, 1897 (p. 1270):—

‘It is not often that one is able to chronicle the introduction of a reform into a Roman Catholic diocese, a reform, moreover, expressly sanctioned by the Pope as being a return to primitive practice. But this is what has just happened in the diocese of Marseilles. It is well known that the Roman practice is to admit children to their First Communion before their Confirmation. . . . The connection between Confirmation and Communion is entirely severed. Both the Pope and the bishop say that this practice is not more than a century old. Two years ago the Synod of Marseilles—a diocese that has recently given other proofs of independent thought—called attention to the modern practice as being unadvisable, and ruled that the children should be confirmed before coming to Communion, “according to the constant and almost universal practice of the Church in past times.” The bishop, visiting Rome shortly after, submitted their synodal decision to the Pope, who not only sanctioned it, but has just written an autograph letter conveying his high approval. He thus gives his opinion:—

“Abrogating a custom which has obtained for

more than a century, you have thought good to establish in your diocese that the children, before taking part in the divine feast of the Eucharist, shall receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation the quickening unction of the Holy Chrism. . . . To this design of yours we give the highest praise. For the practice which has been in use with you and elsewhere was not in accordance, either with the ancient and constant institution of the Church, or with the good of the faithful. There are in the minds of children the germs of evil passions, and if they are not early eradicated they gradually mature leading astray inexperienced hearts and enticing them to their ruin. Therefore the faithful need, even from their tenderest years, to be 'endued with power from on high,' such as the Sacrament of Confirmation is intended to produce. And so children thus early confirmed become more docile in accepting the Commandments, are better prepared to receive later the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and when they receive it to gain from it more abundant fruit. For this cause we earnestly desire that what you have wisely ruled shall be faithfully and continually observed."

The gift of the Holy Ghost being, as we have seen,¹ a consecration to a priestly character, we

¹ Page 27 sq.

should naturally be prepared by the Laying on of hands to take our full part in the great sacrificial rite of the Christian Church. In the Holy Eucharist we celebrate and make before God the memorial which Christ commanded, showing forth His death in glad thanksgiving and in solemn pleading.¹ In celebrating this memorial, the officiating priest acts as the leader of the congregation; all join with him, expressing their assent at least in the 'Amen' with which the prayer concludes.² The feast upon the sacrifice is an integral part of the rite. The Eucharist is of the nature of a peace offering, wherein the worshipper is admitted to God's board to partake of that which has been

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 26. It may be helpful to give the exact words concerning this point of the Prayer of Consecration and Oblation in the American Prayer Book, derived through Bishop Seabury from the Scottish rite:—

'According to the institution of Thy dearly beloved Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, we, Thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto Thee, the memorial Thy Son hath commanded us to make, having in remembrance His blessed passion and precious death, His mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto Thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same. . . .

'And we earnestly desire Thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant that, by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we, and all Thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion.'

² 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

offered to God and accepted by Him. This feature is of course conspicuous in the passover rite, which finds its antitype and realisation in the Holy Eucharist.¹ In the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, the Oblation and the Communion ought not to be severed from one another in thought nor in general practice, though the one idea may be more prominent in the mind at one time and the other at another. None can have their full share in the oblation, nor claim the application of its benefits to themselves, without partaking of that which is offered. The Communion derives its virtue from the Sacrifice, and the benefits of the Sacrifice are applied in the Communion.²

While then the unconfirmed may be allowed to be present at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by way of preparing themselves to take their full part in the 'sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,' it should be impressed upon them that this permission is distinctly provisional. For the outward privilege of sharing in the Church's distinctive rite, and for spiritual enabling thus to draw near to God in union with our Lord Jesus Christ—showing forth His victorious death, and offering themselves along with Him a reasonable, holy, and living

¹ 1 Cor. v. 7, 8; Exod. xii. 1-20; Lev. vii. 15.

² See Bishop Andrewes, *Sermons on the Resurrection*, vii.

sacrifice—they need not only the washing by the Spirit in Baptism, but His unction also in Confirmation.

Such considerations as these, it may be pointed out, need to be taken into account in determining the proper qualifications for membership in church councils. Doubtless there are practical difficulties and moral dangers involved in a communicant test. On the other hand, it will be recognised that the mere fact of a person having been baptized, perhaps in infancy, while he neglects the duties and privileges which belong to him as a member of Christ's Body, or even shrinks from a personal acknowledgment and renewal of those obligations, and so has never had his Baptism sealed in Confirmation, is a scanty and unreal qualification for a share in deliberations concerning the welfare of the Christian society or in the exercise of its discipline. Such responsibilities, as well as more active works of charity, belong in their measure to the laity. They pertain to that royal priesthood which is the prerogative of the whole Body of Christ, with its many organs, each having its appointed function.¹ But for this common priesthood, with its privileges and responsibilities, all need the anointing of the Spirit which is the gift of Confirmation.

¹ I Cor. xii.

The American Prayer Book has the following rubric at the end of the Order for Confirmation:—

‘The minister shall not omit earnestly to move the persons confirmed to come, without delay, to the Lord’s Supper.’

A person not intending to become a communicant would clearly be unfit for Confirmation. There must be in such a person either some grievous misunderstanding of the nature and benefits of Holy Communion, or some moral fault whether of pride or want of true repentance. While some further instruction on Holy Communion may in many cases conveniently be given after Confirmation, the First Communion should not be delayed for more than a week or two. It has often been found that the most difficult persons in a parish to reach are such as have been confirmed (probably with very inadequate preparation and instruction), but not brought to Holy Communion.

On the other hand, there can scarcely be a more sad example of misused or neglected privileges than the case (which used at any rate to be common in England) of persons who have, as a matter of course, ‘taken the Sacrament’ once, immediately after their Confirmation, but have never since received that which should be strength to the weary and food to

the faint. A regular rule for reception of Holy Communion after careful preparation should be made at the time of Confirmation, the frequency of reception varying with opportunity, circumstances, and spiritual attainment. Three times in the year, of which Easter is to be one, is the least that the Church of England requires.¹ The full share in the Eucharistic feast on every Sunday and Holy-day is the ideal which the Church puts before her children. Towards this we should be working, with such steps as spiritual prudence dictates, our own and that of a trusted counsellor.

Note.—In a sermon on Confirmation, Bishop Ravenscroft of North Carolina speaks thus of the origin of the ordinance :—

‘Coeval with the administration of the ordinances of religion in the Church of Christ, we find it to have been the practice of His apostles to follow the Sacrament of Baptism, sometimes immediately, sometimes more remotely in point of time, with the Imposition of their hands together with prayer, that the persons who by Baptism had become the disciples of Christ, might in this, the ordinary and appointed mode, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, whether that was in the communication of those extraordinary operations which at the first evidenced the divine original of the Gospel,

¹ See the last rubric but one at end of the Order for Holy Communion.

and of the authority of those to whom it was recommitted ; or in the more ordinary, more necessary, and more frequent effects of His presence as the promised Comforter, Guide, and Sanctifier of Christ's disciples.'

Concerning the purpose and design of the rite he says :—

'Another purpose also was intended to be answered by this ordinance of Confirmation—which was to establish believers in the vital doctrine of the unity of the Church. A doctrine which our Lord laid down with the utmost plainness and precision, as decisive of the fellowship to which we are called by the Gospel, and which His apostles pressed upon their converts with the utmost earnestness, but which seems now to be nearly lost sight of in a divided Christian world. *There is one Body*, says S. Paul to the Ephesians, *and one Spirit*, even as ye are called with one hope of your calling. Therefore the power to impart the gifts of the Spirit, whether ordinary or extraordinary, was confined after the ascension of Christ to His apostles, and to such as they commissioned to govern the Churches in His name.

'There was yet a further purpose to which this ordinance was applied in the Primitive Church, but subsequent to the times of the apostles, which I will mention.

'It was believed to obviate and cure any defects, either of irregularity or of want of authority in the administration of Baptism. Hence, such persons as had been baptized in infancy either by laymen or by ministers of heretical Churches, when they came afterwards to a better mind on the subject of religion, and were desirous to join the true Apostolic Church of Christ, had the deficiencies of their Baptism remedied by the Laying on of the hands of the bishop ; for

it was an early decision of the Council of the Church, that as there was but one Baptism, it ought not to be repeated, even where irregularity and defect of authority attended it.'¹

¹ Bishop Ravenscroft's *Works* (1830), vol. i. pp. 491, 495, 497.

CHAPTER VII

THE AGE FOR RECEIVING CONFIRMATION

IN the early days of the Christian Church Confirmation was ordinarily administered in close connection with Baptism. Both rites were administered at certain great festivals, the bishop presiding at the Baptism and laying his hands on those who had been baptized. Among these would be included persons of all ages. As the Church increased and children were born of Christian parents, the practice of infant Baptism naturally spread. No distinction as to age was made between the washing and the sealing, Baptism and Confirmation. This custom has continued in the Eastern Churches, where, as we have seen, a priest confirms with Chrism blessed by the bishop. Communion is likewise given to infants. In the West, where Confirmation is administered by a bishop, the practice has varied. It is uncertain when the custom of giving Confirmation along

with Baptism ceased in the Latin Church. It would appear that, as the Baptism of infants came to be the ordinary rule, Confirmation was no longer joined with Baptism.

In England the old rule prevailed. Mediæval English Synods favoured early Confirmations. For instance, a Synod of Exeter in 1287 ordered that children were to be confirmed before they were three years old; parents who neglected this were to fast every Friday on bread and water until their children were confirmed (Ch. 3). Children were apparently brought to the bishop at the first opportunity that his presence gave. This is the probable explanation of the rule that children were to be confirmed within three years, the bishop being expected to make a visitation of his diocese once in every three years. On the continent of Europe, however, a different custom had come into vogue. In the thirteenth century a Synod of Cologne directed priests to admonish parents to bring any children who were yet unconfirmed to the bishop at the age of seven years and upwards.¹ A later Synod of Cologne in the sixteenth century says that it is more fitting and useful if some little instruction is added, but that until a child has advanced beyond its seventh year it can understand

¹ Synod of Cologne, 1280, ch. 5.

little or nothing of what is done at Confirmation.¹ S. Carlo Borromeo at Milan made the same rule,² and this is also adopted and authorised in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which says: ‘Here it is to be observed that, after Baptism, the Sacrament of Confirmation may indeed be administered to all; but that, until children shall have attained the use of reason, its administration is inexpedient. If not, therefore, to be postponed to the age of twelve, it is most proper to defer this Sacrament at least to that of seven years.’³

The English Church at the Reformation, while it set itself against its own earlier custom of confirming *infants*, which had already been modified in Europe, yet required that *children*⁴ should be brought to Confirmation *so soon as* they could say in their mother tongue the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and also could answer to such questions in the Catechism as the bishop should put to them. This was the direction of the rubric in the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552. But in practice the standard of age was gradually raised.

¹ Synod of Cologne, 1536, part vii. ch. 9.

² Synod of Milan, 1565, part ii. ch. 3: ‘The Sacrament of Confirmation shall be given to no one under seven years of age.’

³ Part II. ch. iii. q. 17.

⁴ In Canon Law childhood begins at seven and ends at twelve for a girl, and at fourteen for a boy.

Canon cxii. (of 1603) requires all persons 'being of the age of sixteen years' to communicate at Easter. With triennial visitations this would mean that many might receive at twelve or thirteen. Before that age they were forbidden to communicate by Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions.¹ In this connection it is interesting to note that in 1662 the words 'Defend, O Lord, this child,' were changed to 'this thy *child*,' with the addition also of the alternative phrase, 'this thy *servant*.' In the following collect 'these thy *servants*' was substituted for 'these children.' It is evident that by this time candidates were often older than had been customary in earlier days, owing both to delay in presenting the Church's children, through the expulsion of the episcopate under the Commonwealth, and also to the multiplication of dissenters, who on reconciliation to the Church in adult life would be confirmed.

As the subjective side of Confirmation became more prominent in people's minds (and this view was undoubtedly emphasised, though unintentionally, by making in 1662 the Preface and the Interrogation an actual part of the service proper),

¹ Injunctions of 1559: 'That children be not admitted to the Communion before the age of twelve or thirteen years, of good discretion, and well instructed before.'—Cardwell, *Documentary Annals*, vol. i. p. 206.

the age for presenting candidates would naturally come to be higher, until the *maximum* of the earlier period of the Reformation, and of the Tridentine Catechism, became the *minimum* at which bishops were willing to receive children.

Undoubtedly it is competent for the Church to lay down conditions on which the gift of Confirmation shall be bestowed; and this right, following the whole Western Church, the English Reformers used in requiring that children shall have attained to 'years of discretion.'¹ But for individual bishops to fix on some arbitrary age, such as fifteen years, as the standard, is to restrict the liberty which the Church distinctly allows, if not to violate its directions. Godparents are bidden 'take care that the child be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him *so soon as* he can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and is sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose.' With this agrees the rubric at the end of the Catechism: 'So soon as children are come to a competent age, and can say the Creed, the Lord's

¹ See the actual words of the Preface to the Order of Confirmation: 'To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive the same, the Church hath thought good to order,' etc.

Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can answer to the other questions of this short Catechism, they shall be brought to the bishop.’¹ The terms ‘competent age’ and ‘years of discretion’ must be understood in connection with the other specified requirements. The competence required is not that of trained theologians; nor the discretion that needed ‘to choose for themselves’ (as people often speak) between various rival forms of religion, Christian, semi-Christian, and un-Christian. The children here under consideration are such as have been baptized in the Church, and taught the Christian religion as the Church has received it, and as it is summed up in the Catechism.

The Archbishop of York (Dr. Maclagan), in a Pastoral to his clergy (Epiphany 1896) on the subject of Confirmation, dealing with this question says :—

‘The gift [in Baptism] of a new life and the imparting of spiritual power, as well as the remission of sin, which make up together the process of regeneration, may well be bestowed as a free gift of grace upon an unconscious infant, and received by the child to its soul’s health and salvation. But the Divine Person of the Holy Ghost awaits a

¹ These passages, substantially the same in both the English and American Prayer Books, are quoted from the latter.

welcome to the individual heart, and requires that we should be at least "a willing people in the day of His power." . . . At what particular period of life this surrender of the will may be most fitly made, and the desire of the heart most truly expressed, is a question depending in some measure upon the circumstances and disposition of individual children. But giving due weight to the considerations specified in the rubrics of the Church, it may be approximately fixed at such time as the character of children is being usually formed. Probably the age of twelve would most nearly coincide with this stage of child-life in the case of girls, and a slightly greater age in the case of boys. There is no reason why, in special cases, even younger children should not be confirmed where there has been an exceptionally early development of the faculties and of the religious idea.¹

With this agrees what Bishop Jeremy Taylor lays down as the rule 'which the Church of England and Ireland follows, that after infancy, but yet before they understood too much of sin, and when they can competently understand the fundamentals of religion, then it is good to bring them to be confirmed, that the Spirit of God may prevent their youthful lusts, and Christ by His word and

¹ *Guardian*, Feb. 5, 1896, p. 199.

by His Spirit may enter and take possession at the same time.¹

Besides the importance of anticipating with new gifts of controlling grace the rising of passion and the stirring of all sorts of emotions as manhood and womanhood are developed in our boys and girls, the migratory habits of large classes of people, both in the Old World and in the New, should be taken into account in determining the age for Confirmation. It is of great importance that young people should be settled, so far as possible, in their religious practices before they leave the old associations of home, and of the church and pastor of their childhood, for new and oftentimes unhelpful surroundings in a larger world.²

Enough has probably been said on the necessity of approaching and welcoming a spiritual gift with reality of spiritual appreciation, to render unnecessary a warning against any taking for granted that at such and such an age it is the correct thing for young people to be confirmed, or the bringing to bear of such motives in order to induce them to present themselves as candidates, whether really desirous and prepared or not. Unreality in such a matter, and especially when encouraged by teachers

¹ *Discourse of Confirmation*, section vii.

² See note at end of the chapter.

of religion, can hardly fail to have an injurious if not disastrous effect upon the whole after life of persons so treated. Attention to the last rubric following the Catechism in the Prayer Book would have proved a safeguard against a practice not uncommon in America, which deserves censure far more serious than might follow a mere irregularity:—

‘Whensoever the bishop shall give knowledge for children to be brought unto him for their Confirmation, the curate [*i.e.* the minister in charge] of every parish shall either bring, or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his parish as he shall think fit to be presented to the bishop to be confirmed.’

This provision clearly implies that the persons have made up their minds to be confirmed, and that the parish priest assumes the responsibility of recommending and presenting them to the bishop for the administration of the rite. It is altogether inconsistent with the practice of delivering lectures on Confirmation to such as may be interested in the subject, accompanied perhaps with some exhortation to individuals whom the clergyman would like to see confirmed, and then leaving it to them to ‘come forward’ or not as at the time they may feel

disposed, moved perhaps by the presence or absence of a friend, or by a stirring sermon from the bishop before the administration of the rite. The bishop should insist on receiving the list of candidates to be presented at least before the commencement of the rite. If a person has not definitely determined beforehand that he desires to be confirmed, he can hardly be in a fit state to receive the gift.

A word may be said with reference to a cognate subject. One can never be too old to be confirmed. If through one cause or another—ignorance, prejudice, indifference, or lack of opportunity—the gift of the strengthening Spirit has not been received in early years, it must be the part of spiritual earnestness and dutifulness to seek the gift in mature life or even in old age. No consideration of bashfulness or the like should be allowed to stand in the way.

Hooker's defence of the separation of Confirmation from the Baptism of infants is worth quoting: 'Sometime the cause of severing Confirmation from Baptism was in the parties that received Baptism being infants, at which age they might be very well admitted to live in the family; but because to fight in the army of God, to discharge the duties of a Christian man, to bring forth the fruits and do the works of the Holy Ghost, their time of ability was

not yet come (so that Baptism were not deferred) there could by stay of their Confirmation no harm ensue, but rather good. For by this mean it came to pass that children in expectation thereof were seasoned with the principles of true religion before malice and corrupt examples depraved their minds, a good foundation was laid betimes for direction of the course of their whole lives, the seed of the Church of God was preserved sincere and sound, the prelates and fathers of God's family to whom the cure of their souls belonged saw by trial and examination of them a part of their own heavy burden discharged, reaped comfort by beholding the first beginnings of true godliness in tender years, glorified Him whose praise they found in the mouths of infants, and neglected not so fit opportunity of giving every fatherly encouragement and exhortation. Whereunto Imposition of hands and prayer being added, our warrant for the great good effect thereof is the same which Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Fathers, and men of God have had for such particular invocations and benedictions, as no man I suppose professing truth of religion will easily think to have been without fruit.¹

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. lxvi. 7.

Note.—A valuable article in the *Church Quarterly Review* for October 1886 on 'The Age for Confirmation' quotes statistics to show the unsatisfactory result of an arbitrary standard of fourteen or fifteen years as the age for Confirmation in England :—

'The first point to be noticed is that a late standard of age puts serious obstacles in the way of obtaining candidates. This is not the case with children of the so-called upper classes so much as it is with the poor, for they have not finished their education so early as fourteen or fifteen. But among the poorer classes, both in town and country, there is a natural desire that schooling should be terminated and work begun as soon as possible. Even under the present Elementary Education Code the whole school course can ordinarily be completed before fourteen years of age. Unless some exceptional causes interfere a child is usually qualified for exemption from school attendance about a year earlier. As a matter of fact, the majority of elementary school children leave between thirteen and fourteen, *just before the time when they can be presented for Confirmation.*

'The change from school to work is a very great and unsettling one. Breaking ground in a new and older kind of life involves novel experiences, and invites strong temptations. In the first taste of freedom from mental discipline and childish restraints, young lads and girls are often for a time less amenable to teaching than at either a younger or an older age. If previous training has not already grounded them well in the full value of sacramental grace, the period immediately following the commencement of work is frequently not the best for beginning to instruct them. There are clergy of competence and experience who are of

opinion that, for such persons, the time between fourteen and eighteen is practically the worst possible for preparing them.

‘But, again, where there is every readiness for Confirmation, there are constantly great difficulties in the way after a child has left school. Girls go out early to service, and boys also often have to leave their home, and thus children are frequently lost to the hands of the clergyman under whom they have grown up, and who may, therefore, generally be supposed to be the priest best qualified to prepare them. Employers, moreover, if they are not themselves Church-people, often try to prevent, or at least discourage, those who work for them from being confirmed. Even if they are well disposed, it may be quite impossible to spare the boy or girl during working hours. This necessitates preparation at inconvenient times, so inconvenient perhaps that the candidate does not care to put himself to the trouble, unless he already knows the full importance of Confirmation. And, even when all concerned are willing to do their best, the preparation sometimes has to be sadly fragmentary and incomplete. Nor is the preparation the only difficulty. A Confirmation is nearly always on a week-day, and usually at such an hour as requires a half-day’s absence.¹ The child at school can always get away for the purpose, but not always the person who is at work. A well-prepared candidate has often to be left behind after all, because it has been impossible to get a holiday except at the risk of losing a situation—a price which it is practically almost impossible

¹ The custom common in America of administering Confirmation on Sunday, and on a week-day evening, might probably be more generally adopted in many places in England.

to pay when work is scarce and means of livelihood precarious. Such difficulties and disappointments are common with both sexes and in all ranks of lower and lower middle-class life, but especially with boys, and particularly in busy manufacturing towns. Hence, partly, the deficiency of candidates, and the small proportion which the males bear to the females.'

CHAPTER VIII

THE PREPARATION REQUIRED FOR CONFIRMATION

THE preparation required for Confirmation has been already in part considered. It may be regarded as two-fold: (1) intellectual, and (2) moral or spiritual.

(1) All candidates are to be able to say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and to be instructed in the Church Catechism, which explains the rule of faith, the rule of conduct, the rule of prayer, and the sacraments as the great means whereby Almighty God promises to communicate to us His grace. They are expected to have an intelligent knowledge of their religion, its belief, privileges, and obligations. The standard of this intelligent knowledge must of course vary with the age, circumstances, and opportunities of the candidates. This we can say, that their religious knowledge ought to be at least in proportion to their intelligence and education in secular subjects.

With the higher standard of general education in all our schools, we ought not to be content with a mere parrot-like repetition of the Catechism in those who are presented for Confirmation. Moreover, in these days of abounding disputation our candidates ought to be taught, both for their own sake and for the sake of others, to give answer to any one that asketh a reason for the hope that is in them. They are not expected to be trained theologians, certainly not practised controversialists, but they should be intelligent Christians and Churchmen, with an understanding of the claims of the Church upon their allegiance. This instruction is more particularly needed in the case of persons who have been brought up outside the Church's teaching. Her distinctive doctrines for faith and life must be made clear, and her authority accepted.

(2) Intellectual instruction is, of course, subordinate to moral and spiritual preparation. Religious knowledge must lead to practice. We are to build up ourselves, our moral and spiritual life, on the foundation of our most holy faith.¹ The solemn and public renewal of baptismal vows, which forms, when rightly understood, a most fitting prelude to the reception of Confirmation, requires, if it is to be rightly performed, self-examination as

¹ S. Jude 20.

to the fulfilment in the past of those obligations, a knowledge of what they practically involve, and the formation of a deliberate purpose to abide thereby. In all this the candidate, of whatever age, may be greatly helped by pastoral instruction and advice; but it must be pressed upon him that the most important part of the preparation can only be done by himself in communion with God. The baptismal vows and the Catechism explanation of the Commandments, under the heads of our duty towards God and our duty towards our neighbour, afford a most excellent outline for private self-examination, which can, of course, be supplemented by other aids. Candidates should be taught to use the Catechism in this way. It is of great value thus to link together instruction and devotion, by using formularies of doctrine as skeletons and starting-points for personal prayer.

The importance of an earnest and thorough repentance (in all its parts of sorrow for sin, confession of sins, reparation for wrong, and amendment of life) should be specially insisted on, since Confirmation does not in itself confer forgiveness, but presupposes it.¹ The gift of the Holy Ghost

¹ See the prayer before the Imposition of hands: 'Almighty and everliving God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them

is to the regenerate who have received in Baptism the forgiveness of all their sins, and who are regarded as not having fallen away by serious faults from that state of acceptance and innocence to which they were then admitted. Where—as, alas, will be only too often the case—grievous sins of one kind or another have defiled the soul, and its peace with God has been forfeited, reconciliation is to be sought in humble prayer and confession; and where the conscience is still troubled recourse should be had to the individual ministry of a priest, as we are encouraged to do in the warning for Holy Communion.

The different elements of a true repentance are most admirably stated in this warning, which is as applicable to Confirmation as to Communion:—

‘The way and means thereto is; First, to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God’s commandments; and whereinsoever ye shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. And if ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only

forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace,’ etc.

against God, but also against your neighbours; then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them; being ready to make restitution and satisfaction according to the uttermost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other; and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as ye would have forgiveness of your offences at God's hand: for otherwise the receiving of the Holy Communion doth nothing else but increase your damnation. Therefore if any of you be a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of His Word, an adulterer, or be in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime, repent you of your sins, or else come not to that holy Table; lest, after the taking of that holy Sacrament, the devil enter into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul.

‘And because it is requisite, that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the

benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.'

While no priest has a right to require a special confession, or to press it as an obligation, this privilege should be plainly put before candidates for Confirmation, with reference both to their immediate preparation and to subsequent needs that may arise in their life.

In any case, thorough frankness of spiritual intercourse should be encouraged. Hooker's teaching concerning the priestly and pastoral office needs to be impressed upon our people. The clergy, he says, 'our Lord Jesus Christ hath left in His Church to be spiritual and ghostly physicians, the guides and pastors of redeemed souls, whose office doth not only consist in general persuasions unto amendment of life, but also in the private, particular cure of diseased minds.'¹

We all have our individual doubts and perplexities to be solved, our sorrows to be borne, difficulties to be overcome, temptations to be wrestled with, sins to be repented of, and (thank God!) our aspirations and yearnings to be realised. Most of us from time to time need the help of encouragement, sympathy, or counsel in these varied

¹ *Eccles. Pol* vi. iv. 7.

experiences of life. All should feel assured, certainly not least the young Christian in the early stages of a religious life, that they can turn with confidence and naturalness to their spiritual pastor for such help as they may need and desire. Many a young man, who has thought his temptations and sins quite exceptional, might have been saved from despair and recklessness if only he had 'opened his grief' to some wise and sympathetic friend (who so natural a counsellor as his clergyman?) who could 'bear gently with the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.'¹

The writer well remembers the exclamation of a middle-aged man, after making a most earnest and penitent confession and receiving absolution—'If only, sir, I had known that I could thus be freed of this burden, I should have been confirmed and become a communicant eighteen years ago!'

Instruction should further be given on the practices of a Christian life, the intelligent reading of the Bible, the devout reception of Holy Communion, the observance of the Church's seasons, the practice of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, under which heads will be included all exercises of devotion, self-denial, and works of charity.

The sad neglect of systematic *teaching* of the

¹ Hebrews v. 2.

Christian religion, its sanctions, privileges, and obligations, in perhaps a majority of our parishes and schools, is a source of much present evil and future danger. The following paragraph from an article on the subject in the *Church Standard* (Philadelphia, December 17, 1898) applies not to the American Church alone:—

‘The primary duty on which the progress and final triumph of all righteousness depends is the preaching of the Gospel; and beyond all question, *the plain preaching of the Gospel, as this Church hath received the same, has been falling into terrible neglect.* Our children are not catechised; they are brought to Confirmation without being “sufficiently instructed in the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and in the other parts of the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose.” They are Christians by accident, so to say, not by conviction. They are wholly unprepared to meet the anti-Christian influences which surround them. They are not trained to a deep sense of the reality or obligation of the spiritual life to which they are called; they are not taught really to believe in the spiritual benefits of the Sacraments; they have no idea of the sacredness of the Church as Christ’s Body, nor of their own bounden allegiance to it as members of Christ.

In far too many cases their instruction is purely perfunctory, and their relation to the Church is merely formal. Of our own Church, its constitution, history, position, claims and title to their allegiance, they often know nothing at all; they are received into its communion as into a bag with holes, out of which they soon drop; and there is no class of human beings whom it is harder to win to the realities of a spiritual life than that of those who have been admitted to spiritual privilege without being touched by the sense of spiritual power. The neglect of catechising in our Church, we do not hesitate to say, is one of the worst and most ominous signs of the present time.'

CHAPTER IX

THE BAPTISMAL VOWS

It has been already insisted on, and more than once, that the renewal of the baptismal vows is a preliminary to Confirmation and not Confirmation itself, that candidates come not to confirm but to be confirmed. Nevertheless the solemn renewal of the vows by the candidate is the condition on which in the Anglican communion the grace of Confirmation is bestowed. And it is most important that these sacred promises should be rightly understood.

First, let it be grasped that, strictly speaking, the baptismal vows create no new obligations. They are but the explicit recognition of obligations by which all men, whether baptized or not, are bound. Every one is bound to avoid evil, to believe in truth, to follow the right. These elementary convictions are implanted in the conscience of all by the Word of God Who lightens every man.¹ In

¹ S. John i. 9; Rom. i. 19, 20, ii. 14, 15.

the heathen or the uninstructed there may be much dulness of perception as to what is evil, or true, or right. Many things may be wrongly classified. By the revelation of God, fully given in the religion of Jesus Christ, we are taught concerning these subjects. Moral evil and its sources are made plain : the truths which it is necessary for us to know concerning God and man—God's being and character, man's origin and destiny, the true standard of his life, his relation to God and means of approaching Him—are revealed : rules for the regulation of our life are given. Accordingly, when we are admitted to the Christian society we are called upon (in our own person, or by sponsors) to make explicit acknowledgment of these obligations, with the expression of our deliberate purpose to fulfil them by the help of God, which is then according to His promise pledged to us. The Devil and his works, the World and its ways, the Flesh and its lusts, represent different forms of *evil*; necessary *truth* is summed up for us in the Apostles' Creed; God's Commandments give the law of *right*. As created by God, we are bound to obey His law, to fight against His enemies, to accept His word, when and as these are made known to us.¹

Were the baptismal promises something really

¹ See note at end of the chapter.

over and above that to which we are bound by the terms of our being, as endowed by God with reason and moral sense, there would be no justification for the Baptism of infants on the strength of promises made on their behalf by godparents. However desirable in itself a certain course of action might be, we should have no right to pledge another without his consent to follow it, if he might in the lawful exercise of his own free choice elect to follow some other line. For instance, a parent could not rightly undertake for a child that when grown up he should take Holy Orders, or become a missionary or a doctor; nor for an infant daughter that she should become a Sister of Mercy or a nurse. Lofty as any of these vocations may be when freely followed in correspondence with what is believed to be God's call to the individual man or woman, their goodness distinctly depends on the recognition of such a personal call in each case to this particular form of life, as one among many in which God may be truly served. With regard to such matters we can do no more than influence a child in this or that direction, and this should be done with caution; but we have as good a right to bring an infant to the font, and there make on its behalf the baptismal promises, as we have to subject it to recognised laws of health or to teach it the multiplication-table.

Our direct concern is with the baptismal obligations as openly acknowledged at Confirmation. It seemed good, however, since the matter is so very commonly misunderstood, to go back a step further, and explain that the making of the vows at Baptism (which are ratified at Confirmation) is in reality only the explicit acknowledgment, put into simple words, of obligations that are upon us as human beings, the nature of these obligations being made clear to us by the Christian religion, and grace and help being offered to enable us to discharge them.

The baptismal promises are three: Renunciation, Belief, Obedience. We throw off allegiance to former masters, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and then surrender ourselves to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. 'O Lord our God, other lords besides Thee have had dominion over us; but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name.'¹

The Vow of Renunciation.

Neither the original renunciation nor its renewal means that we have already conquered the enemies of God and man; but that we set ourselves to a continual and lifelong struggle against them, and this in the assurance that He Who has conquered

¹ Isa. xxvi. 13.

for us will conquer in us. Our Captain, Who in His own person has smitten the enemy to the ground, will enable us to trample him under foot. But the contest will endure, in one form or another, so long as we are in this world. As life and experience advance we learn more of the varied ways in which these enemies assault us. Our Renunciation then, whenever renewed, whether solemnly at Confirmation or on any other special occasion (as at the end of a Mission or a Retreat), or less formally when we repeat the Catechism or in our prayers, should be with growing intelligence and definiteness of intention.

The enemies renounced, against whom we are pledged to fight, are three.

I. *The Devil and all his works.* — Concerning Satan there are several points that we should keep in mind.

(1) He is a spiritual being, with powers, like ours, of thought, affection, and choice, but without any material nature. Material forms in which he is depicted are to be understood as figurative and symbolical representations.

(2) He is not a rival god, only a rebel angel; high among the intelligences that God called into existence, but with only the limited powers that belong to a created being.

(3) He is not alone, but the leader of a host of rebel spirits. As we read of 'Michael and his angels,' so of 'the dragon and his angels.'¹

(4) He was not created evil, but fell through pride and disobedience.² The probation of the angels, in this unlike that of man, may well have been instantaneous, depending on one great alternative of obedience or disobedience. Those who remained true to God became for ever rooted in grace; those who failed fell without hope of remedy. Refusing to use the vast gifts entrusted to them for God's service, Satan and his host became involved in darkness as they turned from God in self-centred pride; their love was turned to hate; instead of carrying out God's will they became His enemies, bent on opposing His purposes and marring His work.

This spiritual foe we must ever regard as a great reality, a power to be reckoned with in our religious life; but we must not cower before him as if he were irresistible. The primæval promise of deliverance has been fulfilled. The Seed of the woman, the Virgin-born, at the expense of His own heel being bruised in the encounter, has bruised the serpent's head.³ Taking to us the armour that

¹ Rev. xii. 7.

² S. Jude 6; 2 S. Peter ii. 4.

³ Gen. iii. 15.

God supplies, we can withstand all his attacks.¹ The Spirit of God can enter more closely and intimately into the human spirit than is possible for any created spirit. If we hearken to His counsel and act upon His strength, He will deliver us from both the crafts and the assaults of the Devil.

‘ Drive far away our ghostly foe,
And Thine abiding peace bestow ;
If Thou be our preventing guide,
No evil can our steps betide.’²

The works of the Devil are those sins of a spiritual kind which he commits, and in which he would lead us to follow his example. Such are pride, disobedience, unbelief, hatred, envy, falsehood. We are sometimes tempted to think that these are less heinous than grosser sins of sensuality or worldliness. At any rate, they are as dangerous and fatal. They strike more directly at the very heart of the spiritual life. Recovery therefrom may be more difficult. Mischief-making and leading others into evil of any kind are, in a peculiar sense, the works of the Devil, whose name is the adversary and the slanderer.³

¹ Eph. vi. 10-13.

² *Veni Creator Spiritus.*

³ *Satan* means adversary. *Διάβολος* is slanderer or accuser. On the whole subject of a personal spirit of evil, see Bishop Barry's article, 'Satan,' in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*. The writer may be permitted to refer also to his Baldwin Lectures, *Christ's Temptation and Ours*, lect. ii.

II. *The vain pomp and glory of the World.*—How very real an enemy the World must have seemed to the faithful in the early days of Christianity! Christians formed but a small and insignificant society, despised or hated alike by Jews and heathen. They were followers of One Whom Jews and Romans and Greeks regarded as an impostor or a fanatic, Who had been put to an ignominious death. Not only were they outcasts from the world of the day, and often outlaws on account of their religion, but the very world itself, with its prevalent cruelty and lust, must have indeed seemed to lie in the power of the evil one.¹ God's work seemed hopelessly ruined. No wonder they were eager to pass out of the world even by a martyr's death at the stake or in the arena, or that in large numbers they fled for refuge to the deserts. The same obvious antagonism we see in heathen countries now, when a convert to Christianity in India or China, for instance, has to make a very real renunciation of the World, since his admission to the Christian Church involves separation from national traditions, social privileges, and family ties. But for ourselves the world seems changed. We are tempted to think that scriptural warnings about its enmity to God are unreal and meaningless.² It

¹ 1 S. John v. 19.

² S. James iv. 4; 1 St. John ii. 15-17.

is comparatively rare for the people with whom we come in contact to repudiate the name of Christian. And the influence of Christianity on the world has indeed been mighty. The world's resources, instead of being chiefly employed in the service of evil, have been largely enlisted in the cause of truth and goodness. In what sense, we ask, is the world an enemy to be renounced?

In their determination to have a clear-cut answer to the question, some people have tried to make artificial distinctions, and to label as 'worldly' certain amusements, occupations, or possessions, while others are pronounced harmless and proper for Christian people. But little serious reflection is needed to perceive that this, like other rough-and-ready methods, affords no satisfactory solution of the problem. It condemns things that in themselves are innocent, as if their use and not their misuse were wrong;¹ it allows and sanctions other things, that in other ways and by other persons are equally liable to abuse. Let us look a little more closely at the promise which we make. It is 'the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same,' that we renounce, 'so that we will not follow nor be led by them.' A good deal of what, when compared with spiritual

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

and eternal interests, may be regarded as empty show and glitter, may be unavoidable by persons in various official or other positions in the world. Regimental uniform, military display, court ceremonial are all necessary, though sometimes burdensome. A Christian man or woman is not forbidden to take part in the affairs of the state. Nor should they make themselves conspicuous and forfeit influence by unnecessary departures from the ordinary customs of their fellows where these are innocent. They must not permit themselves to be carried away by the pleasures or business of the world, so as to have higher thoughts obscured, nor must they allow any worldly considerations to make them swerve from allegiance to God in standing by principle and obeying conscience.

‘The World’ which we renounce is not (1) the material universe, with all its varied beauty and order. This is to be revered and studied as God’s workmanship, reflecting His wisdom and power.¹ Nor is it (2) the world of humanity. We are to ‘honour all men,’² without respect to their station or nationality, as made in God’s image and to be conformed to God’s likeness. ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but

¹ Rom. i. 20.

² 1 S. Peter ii. 17.

have eternal life.’¹ The World we are called upon to renounce is (3) the world, whether of things or persons, regarded in a particular moral light, as divorced from God, existing in independence of Him, its rightful Lord. So viewed, the material world becomes a screen hiding, instead of a mirror reflecting, its Creator. Its gifts are abused, not used. And the world of human society, under the inspiration of Satan, who is styled ‘the prince of the world,’² sets up its customs and standards in rivalry or opposition to the commands of God, Whom in practice, if not in theory, it ignores. Our renunciation, then, is of any thing or any person which comes between us and God, as a rival to Him in our affections—anything or anybody that we love or fear more than God. It may be money or position, which should be received from Him and used for His glory, but which is abused as sought in some unlawful way, or clung to in disregard of higher interests. It may be a friend or partner of our life, who should be rightly loved ‘in God and for God,’ but to please whom we consent to abandon principle and violate our conscience. This is to worship and serve ‘the creature rather than the Creator.’³

¹ S. John iii. 16.

² S. John xiv. 30.

³ Rom. i. 25.

III. *The sinful lusts of the Flesh.*—In enumerating the three sources of evil, we mention them in an order of increasing nearness. Satan, the fallen angel, belongs to a different sphere of being; the World is all about us; the Flesh stands for our own fallen and disordered nature.

Our nature is not in that condition of harmony which God intended for it. We are conscious of a schism within ourselves. Different parts of our being pull in different directions.¹ Inclination and desire are often in rebellion against reason and conscience. Our reason, moreover, is dulled and our will weakened by wrongful indulgence. This is partly the result of heredity, which may stand as the modern equivalent for transmitted or original sin; and this disordered condition which we inherit is aggravated by our actual sins. Nowhere is this disorder more manifest than in our desires for pleasures connected with the body. Accordingly 'the flesh' (which also has a wider signification in the New Testament²) is used especially (as in the baptismal vow) for our lower animal nature, with our irregular and inordinate desires for its gratification.

Our renunciation is not of the body, nor of all desires connected therewith. It is 'the sinful

¹ Rom. vii. 22, 23; Gal. v. 17.

² Gal. v. 19-21.

desires or lusts of the flesh' that we renounce, and promise not to 'follow nor be led by them.'¹ Our bodies with all their organs are God's workmanship; every organ has its proper function, to the exercise of which a certain pleasure is attached, as is the case with the exercise of our higher faculties and powers. The body is to be treated with the greatest reverence, to be used according to God's law and for its intended purposes. We are to 'glorify God in our body' as in our spirit.² It is for this reason, because of the sacredness of the body, that we are called upon to fight against the lusts of the flesh, inordinate or irregular seeking of bodily pleasure, as if this might ever be an end in itself, to be pursued without reference to God's regulating law or to His design and purpose for the body. So intricate is the structure of our complex being that wrongful—that is, irregular or inordinate—indulgence of our sensual nature works harm both to the body which is thus misused, impairing its powers, and also to our higher nature, which becomes enslaved to the appetites over which it is intended to rule.³ The conscience is blunted, the will weakened, the reason is often dulled or even deranged, the imagination stained, the affections are perverted,

¹ Rom. vi. 12-14.

² I Cor. vi. 20.

³ I S. Peter ii. 11.

and generous and noble desires crushed out. The body should be the instrument of the spirit's service; the flesh must not be allowed to become the spirit's master. By our baptismal vow we are pledged earnestly to strive to preserve our bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity;¹ to avoid all in thought or word that would stimulate evil desires. The instinct of modesty implanted within us by Almighty God is to be our safeguard. Whatever would cause shame, if known by one whom we honour and respect, is to be avoided. We are to 'perfect holiness in the fear of God.'²

The Vow of Belief.

Having renounced the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, the cruel tyrants which usurp dominion over man, we turn to our rightful sovereign Jesus Christ, and vow allegiance to Him Whose service is perfect freedom. We submit ourselves unreservedly to His word; what He teaches us we promise to believe, what He bids we will do.

Note the exact position of the vow of Belief. It occupies the middle place between the Renunciation of evil on the one hand, and the promise of

¹ Catechism.

² 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Obedience on the other. Nothing is by haphazard in the Church's arrangements for the administration of the Sacraments. This is the necessary order. The promise of Belief stands between the other promises, giving support to each. Our enemies would be too powerful, and God's commandments too difficult, were it not for the inspiration and motive which our faith supplies. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'¹ See how this is true with regard to the last division of the Creed, of which perhaps we have been chiefly inclined to think as suggesting controversial and puzzling questions.

Our belief in the Holy Spirit of God, the 'Creator Spirit,' taking up His abode within 'the hearts which He has made,' as an indwelling Helper to protect and guide, gives courage to resist the Devil with all his craft and violence. The acknowledgment of the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, 'the blessed company of all faithful people,' should be our safeguard when the World presses upon us with its false traditions and widespread customs. Over against the deluded, ignorant, or reckless World is the multitude of God's faithful servants, not only those now on earth, but also Patriarchs and Prophets and Apostles and Martyrs,

¹ 1 S. John v. 4.

with the faithful of every age. We will not be severed from their company. Into this glorious army we have been enrolled at Baptism; we must not fall out of the ranks. By their sympathy and fellowship we will be cheered, though we may seem to stand very much alone in outward circumstances. Belief in the Forgiveness of Sins, sealed to us in Baptism, is to save us from discouragement and despair. The expectation of the Resurrection of the Body furnishes a motive for preserving the body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. Belief in the Life Everlasting will give us patience to bear the trials of this life, and courage, should it be necessary, to surrender our life in this world, that we may keep it unto life eternal, rather than prove faithless to God and forfeit our true life.¹ The Devil, the World, the Flesh, I can withstand them all 'steadfast in the faith.'²

These considerations will show how mistaken is the prevalent notion, that it matters little what a man believes if only his life is right. Most certainly 'faith without works is dead';³ our belief must lead to corresponding action; otherwise clearness of vision will only increase our condemnation. But we need the light which faith affords to direct our

¹ S. John xii. 25.

² 1 S. Peter v. 9.

³ S. James ii. 26.

steps aright. Apart from the insult to Almighty God involved in the rejection or slighting of His word, we ourselves are poorer by reason of disbelief or misbelief; we lose something which should have been a restraint under temptation, an incentive to holiness. This practical importance of faith is continually insisted on in the New Testament, not least emphatically by the two illustrations given of its purpose. (1) It is a shield with which to quench the fiery darts of temptation.¹ This is its negative aspect for resisting evil. (2) It is also represented in a positive aspect as furnishing motive for virtuous action. On the foundation of our most holy faith we are to build up ourselves, our moral and spiritual life.²

Knowledge is always power; and God's revelation, accepted and professed by our faith, gives knowledge of the truths we really need to know, about God, and about ourselves, and our relation to Him. The most necessary truths, those on which others depend, are summed up in the Apostles' Creed, acceptance and profession of which is a condition of initiation into the Christian society. The Apostles' Creed gives what we may call an analytical table of contents of the Bible. It puts before us the great truths we shall find enlarged and

¹ Eph. vi. 16.

² S. Jude 20.

illustrated in Holy Scripture. The twelve articles of the Creed are still more briefly summarised in the Catechism. There we are taught that this is what we ‘chiefly learn in these Articles of our Belief’:—

‘First, I learn to believe in God the Father, Who hath made me, and all the world.

‘Secondly, in God the Son, Who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.

‘Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.’¹

Here it will be seen the Creed is resolved into the baptismal formula. We are baptized ‘into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost’;² both into belief in God Whose Name is thus given in full, and into covenant relationship with Him, the Triune God, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. We may make a distinction between believing in a person and believing a fact. In the former case we trust ourselves to the person in whom we believe, believing not merely in his existence, but in his ability and goodness. In this sense we believe in God, the uncreated

¹ The American Prayer Book omits the word ‘elect’ on account of prevalent Calvinism. The word refers to the actual fact of the baptized having been chosen by God and admitted to His Church with all its gifts of grace; not to any antecedent choice of God by which any are marked out for eternal glory.

² S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

Being, Who, as His inner life is threefold, acts towards us in a threefold way, bestowing upon us life as our Creator, rescuing that life from bondage to evil as our Redeemer, guiding and hallowing all the faculties of our being as our Sanctifier.

The other articles of the Creed are distinctly dependent upon these fundamental truths, and mark out steps in our redemption and sanctification. The Son of God redeemed us by His Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. The Redeemer will finally be manifested as our Judge. The Spirit of God sanctifies us—applying to us individually the benefits of our Lord's redemption—in the Church, wherein He constitutes a true fellowship between all Christ's members; He bestows upon us the Forgiveness of Sins, and prepares us for a joyful Resurrection and for the Life Everlasting, of which even now He gives us some blessed foretaste.

While we attribute different functions to the several Persons of the Blessed Trinity, we must remember that each work is that of the Triune God. The Father, as the Source of all being, we naturally regard as our Creator; but the Son is His agent in creation as truly as in redemption.¹ He

¹ S. John i. 3; Col. ii. 16.

Who made re-makes. The work of rescue is not to be thought of as if it originated with the Son, and were independent of the Father. 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.'¹ The Spirit of God, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, comes forth to perfect the work both of creation and of redemption. The work accomplished for us by the Son of God is made effectual within us by His Spirit.²

In this way we shall learn to regard the Creed not as a string of difficult doctrines, but rather as a hymn of exultant praise to the Triune God, made known to us by Jesus Christ, in which we declare

¹ S. John iii. 16.

² 'The sacred "persons" are spoken of as distinct—personally distinct—and yet as so mutually involved in the action one of another that the coming of one is the coming of all (S. John xiv. 16, 18, 23, 26). So truly is God one in three. . . . God is not three separate individuals. What each "person" does the others do. The action of one involves all. God is inseparably one in His being and in His action. If the Father creates, He creates through the Son and by the Spirit. If the Son redeems, the redemption proceeds from the Father and is effected in the Spirit. If the Spirit sanctifies, it is from and in the Father and the Son. Thus when the Spirit came forth at Pentecost out of the uplifted manhood of the Son to impart to us all His richness, He came not merely to supply His absence but to accomplish His presence. He makes Christ present within us, and also the Father: so that God, three in one, dwells in the hearts of His people.'—Gore, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. i. pp. 285-287.

who He is whom we worship, and tell forth the great things He has done for us and still promises.

The Vow of Obedience.

There is less need to dwell at length upon this promise, because the Ten Commandments are so admirably explained in the Catechism under the heads of our duty towards God and of our duty towards our neighbour.

In view of all that has been said, let us recall S. John's declaration, 'God's commandments are not grievous.'¹ They are not arbitrarily imposed. Almighty God never says, You must do this or avoid that because I choose to have it so. He does not in a grudging spirit refuse us any pleasure that would really promote our happiness; nor does He enjoin any task simply to assert His sovereignty. His commandments and statutes are 'for our good always.'² The law of our Creator is the law of our creation, under which we were fashioned, in correspondence with which our well-being alone can be secured. Just as truly as the physical law does the moral law of God mark out the path of our peace and happiness, and its transgression equally involves us in loss and misery. This is obviously the case with

¹ 1 S. John v. 3.

² Deut. vi. 24.

the Commandments of the Second Table; with the law of purity and self-control, with the law of truth and honesty, of respect for another's goods or character or person, with the precept of obedience to all constituted authorities, whether in the family, in the State, or in the Church. These Commandments plainly protect the interests alike of the individual and of society. It is no less true of the Commandments that have more direct reference to our duty to God. Whole-hearted surrender of ourselves to the one true God, reverence for all that is called by His Name, the worship of God, and that in appointed ways—these are not only obligations we owe to God; their violation or neglect works wrong to ourselves, for it involves a slighting of our own highest interests.¹

‘Thou hast made us for Thyself; and our heart is restless until it rest in Thee.’²

A distinction may perhaps be made between God's holy will and His commandments. In one sense His commandments may be regarded as several manifestations of His whole mind and will for us. In another sense we may think of His will

¹ An admirable and exceedingly useful analysis of the Ten Commandments, showing the great principles embodied therein, is given in Appendix II. to Mr. Gore's *Practical Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*.

² S. Augustine, *Confessions*, i. 2.

which we promise to obey, as referring more particularly to the individual purpose which He has for each one of us, as distinct from His commandments which are laid down for all. This individual will and purpose concerns both our outward calling and, more particularly, our inward character. While all are bound to the observance of God's commandments, their application is brought home to each of us. All are called to the imitation of our Lord's example; but some are called to reproduce more particularly certain features of that perfect pattern, while others are to be conformed to Him in other ways. To learn God's will for us we must be careful to listen for the promptings of conscience, as well as to mark the external tokens of His providence.

'Here am I, O Lord.' 'What wilt thou have me to do?' 'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.'

Note.—'There seems to be an opinion prevailing with many, which probably prevents their compliance with the institutions of religion more than anything else, namely, that while they refrain, they may freely indulge themselves in many things which would be inconsistent with the obligations which these institutions imply. But in this opinion several mistakes or false suppositions are contained. It supposes that a man may live innocently, and be good enough, though he live in constant disobedience to God.

It supposes also that a compliance with the ordinances of religion lays new duties upon him, or makes that unlawful for him which before was not so, and those practices sinful which before were innocent. But neither of these suppositions is true. He that lives in disobedience to God lives in a state of sin; for sin is neither more nor less than disobedience to God. And with regard to the other supposition; though it be acknowledged that the ordinances of religion furnish new motives for doing our duty, and supply new strength to perform it, yet our compliance with them increases neither the number nor magnitude of our duties. What can be done consistently with a good conscience may always be done; and what cannot be so done ought never to be done, whether we comply with the ordinances of religion or not. For instance, it is a man's duty to renounce the devil and his works, the world and its wicked tempers, and the evil appetites and passions of his nature, whether he be baptized or not.'—Bishop Seabury, *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 141.

CHAPTER X

THE SEVENFOLD GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

THE prayer in our order for Confirmation immediately preceding the actual Laying on of hands we have seen to be of great antiquity.¹ We can trace its use at least to the seventh century. It may be regarded as what is technically called the 'form' of the rite, the prescribed words, that is, which accompany the 'matter' or action of laying on the hand, making clear with what intention this is done, for what purpose the Holy Ghost is invoked. The prayer should naturally be said by the bishop facing the candidates, and with hands outstretched over them as they kneel before him.

In this chapter it is proposed to consider the seven gifts of the Spirit which are asked for in the prayer. The enumeration is based upon the prophecy of Isaiah (chap. xi. 1, 2), where the Spirit of God is represented as resting upon the Branch or

¹ Page 32.

new shoot from the hewn-down stump of Jesse's tree. This of course represents our Lord Jesus Christ in His sacred Humanity, born of David's line, but conceived by the Spirit of God and fully endowed with all His gifts. The hewn-down stump may well stand not only for the depressed and obscure position of the royal family when David's greater Son was miraculously born thereof; but likewise for the stricken condition nigh unto death of the human race when the second Adam, the seed of the woman, came in the power of the Spirit of God to restore man to his original dignity as God's son, to raise him indeed to a closer fellowship with God than he had enjoyed in his unfallen state.¹

The number seven in scriptural language continually stands for the idea of completeness or perfection. So Mary Magdalene is said to have been possessed by seven devils; that is, to have been completely under the dominion of evil.² In like manner 'the seven Spirits of God' represent the complete power and influence of the Holy Spirit.³ This blessed Spirit is promised in the fulness of His gifts to the members of Christ, imparted to us from Him. In Confirmation we claim the fulfilment of

¹ Gen. iii. 15; I Cor. xv. 22.

² S. Luke viii. 2.

³ Rev. i. 4, iv. 5, v. 6.

the promise, enumerating the several gifts or results of His indwelling presence which we seek. The one pure light is broken up into its various constituent colours. In older rites the response 'Amen' was made after the mention of each of the gifts in the prayer.

Let us see for what they severally stand, how together they meet and supply our manifold needs. The Holy Spirit comes to perfect our moral nature by rectifying all the wayward longings of appetite and enlightening the functions of reason. By sin the understanding is darkened and the will enfeebled. The gifts which at first sight look so much alike are with reasonable ease distinguished one from another, although their explanation by different writers may vary in minor points. The distinction made by Gregory the Great will be useful to begin with. Against foolishness, he says, the Holy Ghost arms us with Wisdom, against dulness with Understanding, against rashness with Counsel, against cowardice with Ghostly Strength or Fortitude, against ignorance with Knowledge, against hardness with Godliness or Piety, and against presumption or pride with Holy Fear.¹

I. *The Spirit of Wisdom.*—Wisdom is the foun-

¹ *Moral. lib. II. in cap. i. Job.*

dation of all, that Wisdom of which it is said 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning.'¹ In opposition to the folly of the world which says, in heart and life if not in word, 'There is no God,'² this Wisdom bids us 'lift up our hearts unto the Lord' and take Almighty God into account as the Alpha and Omega of all things, from Whom we come, to Whom we go, the Source and End of our life, our Creator and our Judge. It teaches us to penetrate beneath the surface, and distinguish between things temporal and eternal, material and spiritual, visible and invisible. Without this Wisdom all other knowledge is for the highest purposes worthless, and may be harmful, as burying us in material concerns and shutting out all higher considerations. This Wisdom, it will be seen, is practically identical with faith, which lays hold on things not seen.³ To this Wisdom our Lord appeals in His question, 'What doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life,' or 'soul'?'⁴ This gift of Wisdom we may ask in the words of the blind men at Jericho, 'Lord, that our eyes may be opened.'⁵ Then we shall be able to follow Jesus, the pattern of our life, in His example of humility and poverty and self-denial, from Jericho, the world-city, to

¹ Prov. i. 7.² Ps. liii. 1.³ Heb. xi. 1 ; 2 Cor. iv. 18.⁴ S. Mark viii. 36.⁵ S. Matt. xx. 33.

Jerusalem, the city of God. In the power of this gift, with God for our Ruler and Guide, we shall learn so to pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal.¹

II. *The Spirit of Understanding.* — Wisdom opens another world to the soul; Understanding contemplates the things therein revealed. It is represented by S. John in the spirit looking through the opened door and beholding the mysteries of the higher world.² The Spirit of Understanding raises our mind to the divine nature and its operations, penetrates into the meaning of Holy Scripture, shows us what is the bearing of the articles of the Creed on our conduct, how to build up our moral and spiritual life on the foundation of our holy faith.³ As on Easter night our Lord opened the mind of the disciples that they might understand the Scriptures,⁴ giving them the key to their interpretation, flooding with a new light words that had long been familiar; so we ask for the enlightening and guidance of the Holy Spirit in our study of the Bible and in meditation, that we may read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest God's word.⁵ How necessary it is in

¹ Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity. ² Rev. iv. 1, 2.

³ S. Jude 20.

⁴ S. Luke xxiv. 45; cf. 25 sq.

⁵ Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent.

these days of abounding discussion of the most sacred subjects to remember that ‘spiritual things are spiritually discerned,’¹ that it is not to brilliancy of wit but to purity of heart that the knowledge of the things of God is promised. A story is told of a great teacher of the Church in the Middle Ages, that when asked where he had gained the understanding of divine truths which shone conspicuous in a treatise he had lately published, he pointed in reply to his prayer desk with a figure of the crucified Lord above it. Indeed it is on our knees that we learn the best things in the best way, that we may expect to be ‘taught of the Lord.’²

III. *The Spirit of Counsel.*—There follow two gifts which deal more particularly with matters of practical conduct. The Spirit of Counsel directs us to make a right choice as to the use of means for attaining the end which Wisdom sets before us, for carrying out the lessons which Understanding teaches. As the Spirit of Understanding is specially exercised in meditation, so we need the Spirit of Counsel in our self-examination. It corresponds with that ‘discerning of spirits’ of which we read in the New Testament,³ enabling us to distinguish

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 10-16.

² Isa. liv. 13.

³ 1 Cor. xii. 10

between real and apparent good, guarding us against the crafts and subtlety of the evil one, who disguises himself as an angel of light to deceive us with plausible but fallacious suggestions.¹ In deciding difficult cases of conscience, or questions as to vocation; in balancing between seemingly conflicting claims, for instance of prudence and generosity, of our family and of the Church; in forming a rule of life, with provision for prayer and sacraments, for fasting and self-denial, for alms-giving and works of charity, we must ask that by the Spirit of Counsel we may have a right judgment in all things.² To gain it we must have 'a listening heart,' ready to receive the intimations of God's Spirit in our conscience.³ 'Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.'⁴

IV. *The Spirit of Ghostly Strength.*—This is the complement to the Spirit of Counsel. The one guards us against the crafts of the subtle serpent, the other against the violent assaults of the roaring lion. The Spirit of Counsel enables us to perceive and know what things we ought to do;

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

² Collect for Whitsunday.

³ 1 Kings iii. 9.

⁴ Isa. xxx. 21.

the Spirit of Ghostly Strength gives us grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.¹ Formidable as may be the influence of the world, the strength of evil passions, and the force of old habits of long continuance, we must ever remember that ‘greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.’² The declaration of the Athanasian hymn, ‘The Holy Ghost is almighty,’ should have a very real spiritual meaning. Nothing less than the power of Almighty God is at our disposal for resisting any temptation that He allows to come upon us, for carrying out any task, however difficult, to which He calls us. The presence and influence of the Spirit of God is represented not only by the gentle whispering breeze, but also, as on the day of Pentecost, by the mighty rushing wind, carrying all before it.³ By the gift thus symbolised the apostles, who before had shown themselves so weak, are strengthened boldly to confess the Lord, and to declare in face of threats, ‘We must obey God rather than men’; to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name.⁴ ‘Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,’ by the gift of this same Spirit we too are

¹ Collect for the First Sunday after the Epiphany.

² 1 S. John iv. 4.

³ Acts ii. 2.

⁴ Acts iv. 19, 20; v. 29, 41.

to show ourselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ in bearing the ridicule or withstanding the pressure of the world, in resisting the devil that he may flee from us, in mortifying the deeds of the body that we may truly live.¹

V. *The Spirit of Knowledge*.—This is distinct from Wisdom, from Understanding, and from Counsel. It is a higher gift, less intellectual, more spiritual. It describes a knowledge more personal, more intimate, more experimental. It may be thought of as corresponding rather with the intuitions of S. John than with the reasoned out conclusions of S. Paul, or to be represented by the declaration of S. Paul near the end of his life, ‘I know Him Whom I have believed.’² There is a knowledge of God in created things which belongs to the pure in heart, which recognises His hand in nature and in history, and in His providential ordering of the individual life. This knowledge ought to be a continually growing possession. S. Peter bids us add to our faith virtue, and to our virtue knowledge; or, more literally, to supply one virtue from or out of another: each should be in the spiritual sphere a natural development of that which precedes it. Virtue added to Faith leads to Knowledge.³

¹ Eph. vi. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 3; S. James iv. 7; Rom. viii. 13.

² 2 Tim. i. 12.

³ 2 S. Peter i. 5.

As we act upon our faith, we come to know for ourselves, with a security against which sneers or even arguments have little effect, what before we had believed on the authority of others. So S. John's words will be realised in our experience, 'Ye need not that any man teach you,' 'ye have an unction from the Holy One.'¹ This does not mean, of course, that we are to be proudly disdainful of the instruction and help which is provided in the Church, through the official ministry and through our fellow-members in the spiritual society; but that we are not to be dependent on this, as if there were none but external teaching, and that we are to look always for the Spirit of God to bring home to our conscience and graft in our hearts whatever words of truth we hear with our outward ears. 'In vain the tongue of the teacher toils without, unless there be One who teaches within.'²

This is that knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, in which our eternal life consists, that is, our higher life even now.³

VI. *The Spirit of Godliness.*—The prayer in its enumeration of the gifts of the Spirit follows the

¹ 1 S. John ii. 20, 27.

² S. Gregory the Great, *in Evang. lib. II. hom. xxx.*

³ S. John xvii. 3.

Latin (Vulgate) translation of Isaiah xi. In the Latin *Pietas*, here rendered Godliness, stands as the sixth gift. Piety expresses the natural relation of a child to its parent. This gift, then, we should understand as leading to the loving fulfilment of our duty towards God, and towards our neighbour for His sake as being children of a common Father. It is that of which S. Paul speaks when he says, 'Ye received [probably at Confirmation] not the spirit of bondage but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.'¹ Addressing God as our Father, we are to live before Him in an attitude of filial trust and love. Our obedience is not to be rendered in a grudging spirit as if He were a hard taskmaster, and we were bent on evading His requirements so far as we could or dared. Not 'Must I?' but rather 'May I?' or, if that sound weak, 'Ought I?' should be the question with which we approach duties. To take each task or trial from a Father's hand will sweeten all that is distasteful and brace us to more energetic service. 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?''² This expresses the filial spirit of the Son of God, in which His brethren, endowed by Him with the Spirit of Godliness, are to share.

¹ Romans viii. 15.

² S. John xviii. 11.

VII. *The Spirit of Holy Fear.*—Does it surprise us that this should be found in the enumeration of the gifts of the Spirit, and that it should be found in this particular place as the last of the gifts, closing the series, and next to the spirit of Godliness or Piety? A lesson we may well learn from this. This is indeed the seal clasping, as it were, the three preceding pairs of gifts, and ensuring perseverance as it guards against presumption.

(1) There is a fear of ourselves, rising from a knowledge of our frailty and a realisation of the perils to which we are exposed. This it is which S. Paul recommends both by his word and by his example. ‘Let him that thinketh he standeth,’ he says, ‘take heed lest he fall’;¹ while concerning himself he says, twenty years after his wonderful conversion, after all his apostolic labours, and after having been caught up into the third heaven, ‘I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, after having preached to others, I myself should be reprobate.’² No past experiences or favours, he would warn us, can exempt from the necessity of care and watchfulness.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 12.

² 1 Cor. ix. 27; 2 Cor. xii. 2.

‘The grey-haired saint may fail at last,
 The surest guide a wanderer prove ;
 Death only binds us fast
 To the bright shore of love.’¹

(2) But it is not only, nor perhaps so much, the fear of ourselves that is included in the gift of Holy Fear, as the reverential fear of God. This is in no way incompatible with that filial spirit of love which we have considered under the title of Godliness or Piety. Rather is it closely linked therewith; even as in the Lord’s Prayer we are taught immediately after the address to our Father Who is in heaven to bow in worship before His majesty and say, ‘Hallowed be Thy Name.’ Loving intimacy is not shown in a rude and careless tossing about of sacred names, or in taking liberties with Almighty God. On the contrary, there will be a fear of losing Him Whom we have learned to prize, a fear of grieving Him Whom we have learned to love. *Sancti sancta sancte tractent* (‘Let the holy handle holy things holily’) is an old motto expressing the sense of Holy Fear with which we should approach the mysteries of truth and grace enshrined for us in Scripture and Sacrament, by which God would draw us near to Himself. The same idea is conveyed in the Greek word *εὐλάβεια*,

¹ *Christian Year*, Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

which signifies the careful, delicate handling of some precious object. In prayer, in watchfulness, in reverent use of all the means of grace, in a restrained speech about sacred things, the spirit of discipline would teach us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.¹

It will be seen from the explanation of the Seven Gifts given above that they may be thought of as finding a special illustration in different ranks and classes of the Saints, in whom the Spirit of God has in peculiar measure accomplished His work of illumination and sanctification. Thus, while the Spirit of Wisdom is common to all saints, enabling them to walk by faith and not by sight; the Spirit of Understanding is the special gift of theologians and doctors who rightly divide the word of truth; the Spirit of Counsel belongs particularly to spiritual guides and ascetic writers; the Spirit of Fortitude to the martyrs and athletes of Christ; the Spirit of Knowledge to contemplatives and mystics; the Spirit of Piety is the ornament of children and innocents; the Spirit of Holy Fear characterises penitents. In such eminent saints

¹ Phil. ii. 12.

these several gifts may be regarded as specially exemplified ; but they are all to have their application to every one of the faithful ; on each of us they are invoked at our Confirmation.

Note.—The following quotation may well be given here as showing the continuity of teaching in the Church concerning Confirmation, although the Epistle from which it is taken has no right to claim the authorship, to which it is ascribed, of Pope Urban I., who suffered martyrdom under Alexander Severus, A.D. 230. The letter is perhaps the work of Isidore Mercator, the compiler of the forged decretals, in which it occurs.

‘ All the faithful ought to receive the Holy Spirit after Baptism by Imposition of the hand of the bishops, so that they may be found to be Christians fully ; because when the Holy Spirit is shed upon them, the believing heart is enlarged for prudence and steadfastness. We receive of the Holy Spirit in order that we may be made spiritual ; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. ii. 14). We receive of the Holy Spirit in order that we may be wise to discern between good and evil, to love the just, and to loathe the unjust, so as to withstand malice and pride, and resist luxury and divers allurements, and impure and unworthy lust. We receive of the Holy Spirit in order that, fired with the love of life and the ardour of glory, we may be able to raise our mind from things earthly to things heavenly and divine.’¹

¹ Ante-Nicene Library, vol. ix. *Fragments of Third Century*, p. 223.

CHAPTER XI

THE COMFORTER OR PARACLETE

IN the prayer preceding the Laying on of hands the bishop asks for the candidates kneeling before him: 'Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, *the Comforter*, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace.' The word is familiar as a title of the Holy Spirit. In our great hymn of praise, *Te Deum laudamus*, we speak of the worship paid to each Person of the Triune God:—

'The Father of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honourable, true, and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.'

It was by this name that our Lord in His last discourse, spoken in the upper chamber on the eve of His passion, described the Holy Spirit Whom He promised to send when He should be removed from His disciples.¹

¹ S. John xiv. -xvi.

‘I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.’¹

‘The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.’²

‘When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me.’³

‘It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you.’⁴

How strange and paradoxical our Lord’s words must have sounded! It was expedient, He said, for His disciples that He should leave them. For three years or so they had been His constant companions, by day and night, in journeying and resting, in prayer and toil: they had witnessed His works, they were inspired by His example, they had come to hang on His words; He had explained their difficulties and composed their differences. And now He is to leave them. To whom shall

¹ S. John xiv. 16, 17.

³ S. John xv. 26.

² S. John xiv. 26.

⁴ S. John xvi. 7.

they look? Who will hold them together? No wonder that sorrow filled their hearts. And yet He said He would not leave them orphans or desolate. He would come to be with them in a new and better and closer fellowship.¹ He would send His Spirit, and by His Spirit He would Himself come to them again; no longer to be present alongside of them, speaking in their outward ear, seen by their bodily eyes, or to be grasped by their hands; but as an internal presence dwelling within them, prompting the motions of their inner life of thought and affection and choice. The Spirit Who would thus come in His place, or Who would make Him to be present in this better way,² He termed 'another Comforter,' or friend, or guide.

(1) The name means much more than is conveyed by the word in our modern English. In old English 'comfort' was not merely equivalent to consolation. It signified (as would be natural from its Latin derivation) strength. A comforter was a strengthener. So the Spirit of God is given to strengthen us with power in the inward man.³ The motives presented by religion and the gifts of grace

¹ S. John xiv. 18.

² See p. 145, and Gore on *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. i. pp. 285, 286.

³ Eph. iii. 16.

it offers are not intended, as people often mistakenly imagine, merely to dry our eyes and console us in our sorrows. It is this weak and effeminate representation of religion which repels so many men. They want something, as they say, which will help them to live their lives, to shoulder their tasks, to bear their burdens, to face their difficulties, to be brave, strong, patient men, not whimpering children. And this is the very aid which the Spirit of God is sent forth to bestow. This is the purpose for which we beg His coming to us in Confirmation: 'Strengthen them, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter' or Strengtheners.

(2) The Greek word *Paraclete*, used in S. John's report of our Lord's discourse, has a still fuller and wider meaning than either 'Comforter' or 'Strengtheners.' Quite literally, it means one who is called to our side to help us in any difficulty. In the margin of the Revised Version of the New Testament the word 'Helper' will be found as an alternative for 'Comforter'; and for a single English word this is probably the best to express the sense of the original. The Spirit of God is bestowed to be our Helper in the fulfilment of our duties, in battling against our spiritual foes, in remaining true in our allegiance to Jesus Christ our Lord.

For four purposes we may especially think of beckoning Him to our aid: (1) to teach us in our ignorance; (2) to guide us in perplexity; (3) to strengthen us in weakness; (4) to help us in our prayers.

(1) The Holy Ghost is spoken of by our Lord as the Spirit of Truth, Who will guide us into all truth, recalling to our remembrance what Christ taught, and unfolding to us its meaning. So He dealt with the apostles, so He deals with the Church collectively and with individual Christians, as we seek His enlightenment and yield ourselves to His guidance. It is not that He continually teaches to the Church new truth. The first apostles He led into all necessary truth. The force and bearing and manifold significance of the truth once revealed He brings home to us from time to time, according to our needs and receptivity.

‘As the page may bear upon its surface writings traced in viewless ink, which are there and yet are as if they were not, until the nearness of the fire shall call them out into a new distinctness, so may all truth be written on the mind of man, and yet be dull and meaningless, until called into power and being by the falling on it of these rays of the heavenly fire; and then every word of Scripture, every voice of God in His Church, every Sacrament,

comes forth into shape and completeness, as Christ is seen by the soul to be there.¹

It is important to be clear as to the function of the Spirit as the teacher of truth. Our Lord's promise was that He should lead us 'into all truth.'² This is quite distinct from the idea that many people, perhaps unconsciously, entertain, that He should bring all truth close up to us, and make it plain before our eyes, like advertisements printed in huge letters on the walls, so that they who run may read. This is not the work of the Spirit nor the mode of His operation. He teaches *within*, quickening our powers of perception, so that we can recognise the revelation which is already given externally by the Word of God, whether in nature or in history, in Scripture or in the Incarnation. So S. Paul prays for his disciples that their eyes may be enlightened, that the inner vision may be quickened, the mind being illuminated by the Spirit of God.³ The Spirit of God comes not to supersede our faculties, but to aid us to use them aright. We must exercise all our mental powers in the study of God's word, while we call Him to our side, Who is pledged to be our helper, to aid us therein. This

¹ Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, *Sermons preached before the University of Oxford*, 1863-1870, p. 147.

² S. John xvi. 13.

³ Eph. i. 18.

is implied in the very word 'help,' which, understood of spiritual aid, help for the faculties of our inner being, we may use in most cases as an alternative for 'grace.' We cannot help an inanimate object, nor one who is not willing and ready to welcome and use the proffered aid. So the grace of God, which is the touch of the Spirit of God on the spirit of man, is offered not to supersede but to enable our own efforts, to quicken our mind, our heart, our conscience, our will, each to be and do its best. In this way we are to call to our aid, to help us in our ignorance, the Spirit of Truth.

(2) And in this same way we are to call upon the Holy Ghost to help us in our doubts and perplexities as the Spirit of Counsel. It is not only concerning matters of belief that we stand in need of guidance. Questions of duty press upon us, where we feel in doubt as to the right path. 'I wish I knew what I ought to do!' is a frequent exclamation, it may be with reference to family or business or social questions, as well as with reference to religious matters. Here it is the conscience or moral sense which needs quickening; and for this purpose the Spirit of God is promised, and His aid is to be sought, to lead us into all truth of life and conduct. We ask counsel of a friend,

and rightly; but oftentimes we may feel that a friend is partial, or that he does not fully appreciate all the reasons which, however poorly we may be able to set them forth, we know in our own hearts must be taken into account. In any case, the ultimate decision must rest with ourselves. Let us not fail to take counsel of the Lord; in prayer putting before Him our difficulties; seeking to gain a calmness of soul which will be capable of perceiving the intimations of His will; weighing honestly the different considerations that have been urged upon us; and then looking for the determination of God's will concerning the matter to be borne in upon us as, gradually it may be, but with increasing clearness, we become assured of the course we ought to take.

‘Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle them shall He learn His way.’¹

(3) As our mind is often dark, and our conscience dull, so our will, alas, is often weak, to perform even what we recognise to be our duty. We need to call to our side as our Helper the Spirit of God to brace our energies and steady our determination. This too is an interior work, not as an earthly friend might by his own strong arm

¹ Psalm xxv. 8.

snatch us in our trembling fear and weakness from an accident or an assault. The Spirit of God comes not merely to free us from the consequences of our weakness, but to make us strong, that we may be enabled to resist the devil, to withstand the world, and to bring into subjection to conscience and reason the unruly appetites and desires of our lower nature.

We are not to look to be delivered from temptation, but to be strengthened to stand firm in the day of trial. In this sense the Catechism admirably explains the concluding petitions of the Lord's Prayer. We ask God that it will please Him 'to save and defend us *in* all dangers both of soul and body; and that He will keep us *from* all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.'

For our example and encouragement the Captain of our salvation, immediately after the Holy Ghost had come upon Him at His Baptism, was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to do battle with the enemy.¹

'To him that overcometh' is the promise made, 'I will give to him to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne.'²

¹ S. Matt. iv. 1.

² Rev. iii. 21.

‘I will follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them: neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them.’

‘For in Thee I shall discomfit an host of men: and with the help of my God I shall leap over the wall.’¹

(4) Our mind is to be enlightened, our conscience quickened, and our will strengthened by the Spirit of God; our affections likewise are to be purified and elevated. Under His guidance we are to learn to love and hate, to hope and fear, to joy and grieve aright, our affections being in each case rightly directed and vigorously inspired.

In particular we need His help in lifting up our hearts to God in prayer. Here we come upon a special application of the title Paraclete, which in general we have translated Helper. The word is the Greek equivalent of the Latin ‘advocate,’ which means one who is called to our side to plead our cause. So S. Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit’s function as our Advocate.

‘In like manner the Spirit helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of

¹ Psalm xviii. 37, 29.

the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.’¹

Amid all our weakness and vacillation, there is in the members of Christ (who are styled ‘saints,’ as being made members of His Body and partakers of the Holy Spirit) a lifting up of the heart to God in yearnings and aspirations which they often cannot express in words, which is due to the presence of the Holy Spirit inciting and inspiring them. In like manner S. Jude bids us ‘pray in the Holy Spirit.’² We are to seek His aid to steady our attention, to direct our affections, to suggest to us prayers which are according to the will of God, such as He will be pleased to hear, such as befit His children and Christ’s members.³ As our Lord, our Elder Brother and great High Priest, is represented as pleading *for* us at God’s right hand,⁴ so the blessed Spirit is imparted from Him the Head to us His members to plead *in* us (not as our substitute here, any more than in His operation on our mind, our conscience, or our will), communicating to us ‘the mind of Christ,’ that we may indeed pray with Him, and that His longings for His people may find an echo in their own hearts.⁵

¹ Rom. viii. 26, 27.

² S. Jude 20.

³ I S. John v. 14; S. John xvi. 23, 24.

⁴ Heb. ix. 24; Rom. viii. 34.

⁵ I Cor. ii. 16.

Thus is the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, our Helper. His help is bestowed within, to quicken and enable the faculties of our nature. His presence is pledged to us from our Confirmation. We are continually to call forth His power, to stir up the gift that is in us.¹

¹ 2 Tim. i. 7.

CHAPTER XII

THE SEAL OF THE SPIRIT

'THE Seal' was one of the most common terms in the early Church for Confirmation. The term has direct scriptural authority. It seems to have been used in somewhat different but harmonious senses.

1. A seal may be stamped on anything as a claim of ownership.

2. A seal is added to a signature in formal documents for further sanction and greater security.

Thus the baptized were sealed with the sign of the cross as belonging to the crucified Lord. And the bishop laid his hand on them in blessing, ratifying the previous rites of initiation into the Christian society which had generally been performed by ministers of lower rank.

In our office the solemn signing with the cross is distinctly an adjunct of Baptism. The blessing by the chief pastor of those who have been baptized by the parochial clergy is the distinctive

rite of Confirmation. Thus our Baptism is recognised, and we are admitted to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership in the Christian society.

So far the outward significance of the sealing. But the term has a deeper spiritual meaning corresponding with the external rites.

(1) The Spirit of God it is Who really seals us as Christians, members of Christ and children of God. We are to be known as belonging to Christ, not merely by bearing the mark of His cross on the forehead, but by being conformed to His likeness in our own disciplined lives. 'They that are Christ's crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.'¹ We are to be made, and not merely called, God's children by the communication to us of our Father's moral character, 'partakers of the divine nature,' of God's love and truth and purity.²

This sealing is effected by the Holy Spirit of God, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son. It is His work. Christ our Lord breathes forth on us His Spirit, as He did on the first disciples on

¹ Gal. v. 24; comp. Rom. vi. 6. The aorist tense refers to the time of their becoming members of Christ in Baptism (Bishop Lightfoot). Then they were, so to speak, fastened to the cross of our Lord, all unruly passions and desires being condemned to the slow death of crucifixion.

² 1 S. John iii. 2; 2 S. Peter i. 4.

Easter day, and more fully on the day of Pentecost.¹ The Spirit of Christ that ruled His sacred manhood is given to us, that we may think Christ's thoughts, catch His temper, have His mind.² Thus are we to be in truth members of His Body, linked to our glorified Head, the ideal and representative Son of man, animated by His Spirit.

(2) This sealing is an internal work. The stamp of God's likeness is made, not from without by an external pressure or the regulation of our outward conduct, but from within, by inspiration or in-breathing of the Spirit of love and truth and purity in our heart and mind and conscience. This was to be the characteristic of the New Covenant.

(3) This sealing is a gradual work. In one sense it is accomplished at the ministration of Confirmation, as is our washing at the font. In a truer and fuller sense the work is then begun and is to be continued throughout our life. The Spirit of God, with whom a new relationship is formed at our Confirmation, by degrees takes more entire possession of our moral being as we yield ourselves to His inspiration and control. 'The fellowship of the Holy Ghost' requires co-operation on our part; the listening ear, the uplifted heart, the surrendered

¹ S. John xx. 22, vii. 39; Acts i. 4, 5.

² I Cor. ii. 10-16.

will are needed; we must thus draw nigh to God that He may draw nigh to us.¹

With an outward seal, the engraving may be never so clear, but save on fitting material no impression is made; the wax must be softened to receive the stamp. So it is with the seal of the Lord; our moral nature must be plastic, as it were, to receive the impress of God's character which the Holy Spirit would stamp upon us.

And as with an external sealing, the impression made at first may be imperfect; the wax must be afresh prepared that a more clear and exact reproduction may be gained: so the character of God, the likeness of Christ, is by degrees reproduced by the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of Christian men and women. By this thought we are to be encouraged, though the work of sanctification in ourselves or in others be slow, even though it be interrupted and marred by sin. In penitence as in innocence the Spirit of God strives with us.

The broken and contrite heart, like the hard wax melted at the fire, will receive the impress of the Finger of God.²

‘Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

¹ S. James iv. 8.

² Ps. li. 10, 11, 17.

‘Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.’

In the light of such thoughts we can better understand the apostle’s words about the Seal of the Spirit. ‘Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God,’ he says, by resisting His inspirations, by allowing in the heart which He would make His temple thoughts and desires contrary to His holiness; ‘Grieve not the Spirit of God, by Whom’ at your Baptism and Confirmation ‘ye were sealed unto the day of redemption,’ that ye might be recognised as belonging to Christ in the day of His perfected triumph, when the redemption will be fully realised, up to which time His Spirit is seeking to conform you to His likeness.¹

In Christ, when ye became Christians, believing in Him and surrendering yourselves to Him, ‘ye were’ at your initiation into the Christian Church ‘sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise’—the Spirit Whom Christ promised He would send on His disciples from the Father²—‘which is an earnest of our inheritance’—His sanctifying presence in our

¹ Eph. iv. 30. ‘Christians are to think of the divine purpose of the Holy Ghost Who has entered into the Church to “seal” or mark it as an elect body destined for full redemption from all evil, in body and soul, at the climax of God’s dealings, the last day.’—Gore, *Practical Exposition of S. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*, p. 187.

² S. John xiv. 16, etc.

hearts now being a pledge of our future perfect moral glory—‘unto the redemption of God’s own possession’—the complete rescue and restoration of the people whom God claims for Himself—‘unto the praise of His glory.’¹

‘Now He that stablisheth [spiritually strengtheneth] us with you in Christ’—as members of His mystical Body—‘and anointed us’—with the healing and beautifying grace of His Spirit, represented in later though not in apostolic times by the symbolical ointment with which the newly baptized were anointed—‘is God; Who also’—at that same time

¹ Eph. i. 13; comp. Rom. viii. 23. ‘The Church is not yet glorified, not yet morally perfected nor full grown in the divine attributes. Its particular members may be living deceitful and dishonourable lives. This is to say in other words that God’s work in “redemption of His own possession,” His acquirement of a people to Himself, is not yet complete. The purchase-money is paid, but it has not yet taken full effect. But redemption is an accomplished fact in the sense that all the conditions of the final success are already there. The ideal may be freely realised in every Christian because he has received the “earnest,” or pledge of the Spirit, the pledge, that is, of all that is to be accomplished in him. And this Spirit was received by each Christian at a particular, assignable moment. We know what stress S. Paul laid at Ephesus on proper Christian Baptism and the Laying on of hands which followed it (Acts xix. 1-7). By Baptism men were spoken of as incorporated into Christ. With the Laying on of hands was associated the bestowal of the Spirit. Henceforth a Christian had no need to ask for the Spirit as if He were not already bestowed upon him; he had only to bring into practical use spiritual forces and powers which the divine bounty had already put at his disposal.’—Gore on the *Ephesians*, pp. 57-58.

of our initiation into the Christian society¹—‘sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts,’ the Spirit’s presence now the firstfruits of that fuller outpouring of the Spirit for which we look to perfect our nature at the resurrection of the dead and in the life of the world to come.²

So S. Ambrose writes, after quoting the above passages of S. Paul to the Ephesians and Corinthians: ‘We were then [at our Baptism, with the following Confirmation] sealed with the Spirit by God. For as we die in Christ, in order to be born again, so too we are sealed with the Spirit that we may obtain His brightness and image and grace, which is undoubtedly our spiritual seal. For although we were visibly sealed in our bodies, we are in truth sealed in our hearts, that the Holy Spirit may portray in us the likeness of the heavenly image.’³

¹ See Plumtre in Ellicott’s *New Testament Commentary for English Readers*, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

² 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; comp. iii. 18 and 1 S. John iii. 2.

³ *De Spiritu Sancto* l. 6 (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. x. p. 103).

CHAPTER XIII

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

S. PAUL, in writing to the Galatians, contrasts the fruit of the Spirit with the works of the flesh.¹ Over against a black list of vices, indulgence in which, he warns his disciples, shuts out from the kingdom of God, here in its initial stage, and hereafter in its full development, the apostle enumerates the fruits of the Spirit, the virtues which should characterise the Christian life. The change of terms, 'works of the flesh' and 'fruit of the Spirit,' as Bishop Lightfoot remarks,² is significant. 'The flesh is a rank weed which produces no fruit properly so-called (cf. Eph. v. 9, 11; Rom. vi. 21); and S. Paul's language here recalls the contrast of the fig and vine with the thorn and the thistle in the parable (Matt. vii. 16 sq.).' The works of the flesh belong to our fallen, unregenerate nature; the fruit of the Spirit stands for the legitimate and

¹ Gal. v. 16-26.

² Lightfoot on the *Galatians*, in loc.

intended results of the Spirit's influence and indwelling, pledged to us as baptized and confirmed members of the Body of Christ.

Nine virtues S. Paul enumerates. In the Vulgate translation the number is increased to twelve (by a paraphrase, in which more than one Latin word is used for a single word in the original), probably with a view to conform the number to the twelve manner of fruits which the tree of life in the Apocalypse is said to bear.¹

It will be observed that S. Paul uses the singular number, 'the fruit of the Spirit.' He seems to imply that while our fallen and disordered nature breaks out in varied forms or works of evil, not necessarily connected with one another, *e.g.* sensuality, unbelief, and hatred, the virtuous character formed by the Spirit of God has a real unity of inspiration and direction. It consists in the use of all our powers of body, mind, and heart, according to God's will and under the guidance of His Spirit. Nevertheless, while keeping this thought in mind, in our study of the different virtues we may without offence style them separately 'fruits' of the Spirit.

The fruits then seem to fall into an easy classification, preserving the apostle's order of three groups of three each. The first triplet, 'love, joy,

¹ Rev. xxii. 2.

peace,' represent the soul's true attitude towards God, as our Father Who has made us His own children in Christ. The second triplet, 'long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,' are virtues which characterise our relations and intercourse with our neighbour as being together children of a common Father. The third triplet contains virtues, 'faithfulness, meekness, temperance,' which belong more particularly to our own character.

In this light we may set before us this catalogue of virtues as a help to self-examination, marking in outline what should be the 'notes' of a Christian, born from above of water and the Spirit, on whom the Spirit has descended in His sevenfold gift, who is nourished by Scripture and Sacrament. 'If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,' S. Paul declares;¹ and he bids us, if we live to the Spirit, to walk by the Spirit's direction.² Well may we pray, as in the Litany we are taught to do, for 'increase of grace (1) to hear meekly Christ's word, and (2) to receive it with pure affection, and (3) to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.'

These fruits, as the very word reminds us, can only be gradually formed and ripened. We are not to look, in ourselves or in others, in the first days of religious striving, for the mature fruit which

¹ Rom. viii. 9. ² Gal. v. 25, Bishop Lightfoot's translation.

belongs to lengthened experience. It is ever 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.'¹ The remembrance of this law of development and growth should have a twofold effect. While it checks impatience, it should urge us on continually to reach out after higher aims than we have yet attained. So in the prayer which accompanies the Laying on of hands the bishop asks for us not only perseverance but advance:—

'Defend, O Lord, this Thy child with Thy heavenly grace, that he may continue Thine for ever, and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto Thy everlasting kingdom.'

As we seek His aid and submit ourselves increasingly to His control and guidance, the Spirit of God will take more complete possession of our faculties, and by the illumination and sanctification of them will increasingly manifest His indwelling presence. This work of transformation which is begun here will be perfected hereafter, when all hindrances to the Spirit's operation are removed. So shall we indeed come unto God's everlasting kingdom, not merely as subjects to an external realm where His dominion is undisputed, but as ourselves the King's children sharing in His sove-

¹ S. Mark iv. 28.

reignty, liberated by the inspiration of His Spirit from all bondage to sin and self.¹ ‘In knowledge of Whom standeth our eternal life, Whose service is perfect freedom,’ is the paraphrase in our familiar collect for peace at Morning Prayer of the Latin ‘*quem nosse vivere, cui servire regnare est.*’ In this world we have ‘the first-fruits of the Spirit,’ ‘the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts’; this is a pledge of that fulness of the inheritance which shall be ours when, giving ourselves wholly to Him, He can wholly give Himself to us.²

I. *Love.*—‘The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which was given unto us’; that is (1) God’s love for us, which (2) kindles a response of love from us to Him.³ This is most appropriately reckoned the first fruit of His inspiration Whom we regard as the personal Love of God, even as the Son is the personal Word or Wisdom of the Father. By the Spirit’s dwelling within us we are taken up, as it were, into the Divine life. As we may think of the Spirit proceeding from the Father to the Son, the expression of the Father’s

¹ Rev. i. 5, 6, v. 10; S. John viii. 31-36; 2 Cor. iii. 17.

² 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13, 14; Rom. viii. 23.

³ Rom. v. 5.

love for Him in Whom He sees His own perfect image, and as returning from the Son to the Father, thus being the mutual love of the Father and the Son, the bond of the blessed Trinity; so because we are sons, accepted in the beloved, members of the only-begotten Son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, and we address Him and look to Him with filial love and confidence as Our Father.¹

This love to God (and in and for God to all that belong to God) is (1) supernatural, not the mere excitement of natural impulse; (2) it is rational, not fantastic or whimsical, but flowing from a reasonable perception of His claims on our affection; (3) it is shown in obedience, not in the stirring of feeling and emotion, but in the surrender of the will. 'If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments.'²

II. *Joy* follows on Love. We are to rejoice in the assurance of our relationship to God. The knowledge that in the Christian Church we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, by the gift of His Spirit, is to cause that our joy be fulfilled.³ By the gift of the Spirit we

¹ Heb. i. 3; Eph. i. 3-7; Gal. iv. 3-7.

² S. John xiv. 15.

³ 1 S. John i. 3, 4.

are anointed with the oil of gladness. 'The joy of the Lord' will be our 'strength' amid difficulties, which will call forth His assistance.¹ We shall learn to rejoice in tribulations, since these will give us the opportunity of seeking in God shelter and support, while our character is purified and developed thereby.

Thus, far from causing a gloom to come over us, our religion, while restraining the exuberance of natural spirits, should communicate a sober cheerfulness to the whole of life. Even penitence, however deep and humble, will not be gloomy. Sin is self-centred, and therefore exposes us to continual disappointment and mortification; in penitence the face is turned toward God, and the light of His welcoming love shines upon our returning footsteps; the assurance of His pardon cheers us; we learn to think less of what we give up than of Him for Whose sake we sacrifice it, and we look for the abundant reward with which He recompenses every sacrifice made out of love for Him.²

If we would cultivate this fruit of Joy, we should be diligent in praise and thanksgiving, praising God for what He *is* as He has made Himself known to us, and thanking Him for what He has *done* for us, in the bestowal both of spiritual and of temporal benefits.

¹ Neh. viii. 10; Is. lxiv. 5.

² S. Luke xviii. 19, 20.

III. *Peace*.—‘The fabric is built up story upon story. Love is the foundation, joy the superstructure, peace the crown of all.’¹

(1) There is the peace of *reconciliation*. ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’² The forgiveness of sins is directly connected with the work of the Holy Ghost. ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them’ was our risen Lord’s charge to the apostles when He had purchased our forgiveness by His death.³ The remission of sins is connected with ‘the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost’ in Baptism.⁴

(2) There is the peace of *security*, as God’s fatherly hand is ever over us for protection in external dangers, and His Holy Spirit ever with us as our Helper against our spiritual foes.

(3) There is the peace of *harmony* with God, as under the Holy Spirit’s influence our own selfish desires are gradually abandoned, and our will surrendered to God’s.

‘Save that His will be done,
Whate’er betide,
Dead to herself, and dead
In Him to all beside.

¹ Lightfoot.

³ S. John xx. 22, 23; Rom. v. 8-11.

² Rom. v. 1-3.

⁴ Tit. iii. 4-7

Thus would I live ; yet now
 Not I, but He
 In all His power and love
 Henceforth alive in me.'

This is indeed a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, the peace of God surpassing every device of ours,¹ an inward peace in the midst of external disquietude and anxiety, like the calm of the deep ocean beneath the disturbance of the surface.

'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.'²

IV. *Longsuffering*.—The triplet that begins with this virtue, as we have seen, concerns our relation to those about us. Duty towards our neighbour follows upon duty towards God. The Christian is to love God supremely above all: he is to love his neighbour as himself.³ And this not merely on philanthropic grounds without reference to God, nor by the mere exercise of a natural kindliness; but as the Spirit of God takes possession of his heart, he will learn to regard all men as brothers, children of a common Father; and in 'the household of faith'⁴ he will recognise this natural relation-

¹ Phil. iv. 7. See Bishop Lightfoot, *in loc.*

² Isa. xxvi. 3.

³ S. Matt. xxii. 35-40.

⁴ Gal. vi. 10.

ship sealed and sanctioned anew, cemented by the common participation in the grace of Christ. Thus a ground is laid and a motive supplied for patient endurance under injuries inflicted by others, for a kindly attitude towards one's neighbours, and for active beneficence on their behalf. In this way Bishop Lightfoot distinguishes the virtues of this second triad, which are again arranged in an ascending scale. We may look at them a little more closely, and in more immediate connection with the inspiration of the Spirit of God. How gentle is His dealing with the sons of men, so persistent in His efforts to win us to God and right! He woos and warns, but will never force our will.

‘For Thou to us art more than father,
More than sister, in Thy love,
So gentle, patient, and forbearing,
Holy Spirit! heavenly Dove!’¹

Often grieved but not easily quenched—this is the history of the Spirit's dealing with the Church and with the individual soul. He unfolds truth, whether for faith or for life, as we are able to receive it; he adapts Himself to our varied circumstances and possibilities. In like manner He would have us, in whom He takes up His abode, deal with others. ‘Love’—the love which He inspires—‘is not pro-

¹ F. W. Faber.

voked, taketh not account of evil ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.’¹ In this same Epistle to the Galatians S. Paul bids those ‘which are spiritual,’ even if a man be overtaken in a trespass, ‘restore such an one in a spirit of meekness.’² If the charge be addressed, as some have thought, to the clergy, who have received a special gift of the Holy Ghost for the office and work of priests in the Church of God, this would only be emphasising the special application to the ministry of a duty which belongs to all who have received the Spirit of God, and who would be guided by His inspiration.

V. *Gentleness*, or Kindness.—‘Love suffereth long and is kind.’³ The same words are employed in S. Paul’s glowing description of Christian Love, which mark these two kindred fruits of the influence of the Spirit of Love. Because ‘the kindness of God our Saviour and His love toward man’ have been made manifest ;⁴ therefore we, as God’s chosen people, are to ‘put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering ; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any.’⁵ This Gentleness or

¹ I Cor. xiii. 5, 7.

² Gal. vi. 1.

³ I Cor. xiii. 4.

• Titus iii. 4.

⁵ Col. iii. 12, 13.

kindness (as Archbishop Trench says) is a grace 'pervading and penetrating the whole nature, mellowing all which would have been harsh and austere.'¹

Tertullian in his defence of the Christian religion² tells us how it was an offence with the heathen for a person to become a Christian. The name itself was hated. But the name, he says, so far as its meaning is concerned, is derived from 'anointing'; and even when it is wrongly pronounced Chrēstian by the heathen, it is still formed from 'sweetness' or 'kindness.' He shows how either interpretation had been realised in the hallowing and sweetening of the lives of those who had become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can the fact of our having been anointed with the Spirit of Christ be recognised by this fruit of the Spirit, Gentleness and Kindness, shown in our family and social and ecclesiastical relationships?

VI. *Goodness*.—This is the more active and energetic virtue which springs from a kindly disposition towards others.

'Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for

¹ *New Testament Synonyms* lxiii. p. 225.

² *Apology* 3 (Oxford translation, p. 9).

the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth.'¹

Works of mercy, of one kind or another, for the bodies and souls of men, will be a natural outcome of the indwelling of God's Spirit in our hearts. One result of His coming at Pentecost was that 'all that believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.'² The common indifference among Christian people to Christ's parting command to 'make disciples of all the nations,' to 'preach the Gospel to the whole creation,'³ is a proof at once of the little value we set upon our own religious privileges, and of the restricted influence which the Spirit of God has upon our life and conduct. The man who is animated by the Spirit of God will be anxious to claim his share, in every available way—by prayer, by alms, by sympathy, by active labour—in the missionary, educational, reformatory, philanthropic work of the Body of Christ.

¹ 1 S. John iii. 16-18.

² Acts ii. 44, 45.

³ S. Matt. xxviii. 19; S. Mark xvi. 15.

VII. *Faithfulness*.—This, not belief in God, is the meaning here of the word translated ‘faith’ in the Authorised Version. It tells of the thorough trustworthiness, fidelity, and honesty which should characterise the servants of Christ, by which, in whatever state of life, they are to ‘adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.’¹ By this soundness of character and conduct, rather than by loud professions, the Christian should be recognised at school, or in business or society or politics, and the presence of God’s Spirit manifested.

‘Wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil,
Nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin.
For a holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit,
And will start away from thoughts that are without understanding,
And will be put to confusion when unrighteousness hath
come in.’²

VIII. *Meekness*.—Moses is said to have been ‘sanctified in his faithfulness and meekness.’ He was faithful in all God’s house as a servant. Under repeated provocation from those whom he was commissioned to lead, he showed himself (save on one conspicuous occasion, which brought its terrible

¹ Titus ii. 10; comp. S. Matt. xxiii. 23.

² Wisdom of Solomon i. 4, 5.

punishment) ‘very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.’¹

In Scripture, Archbishop Trench says, meekness is ‘an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God (Matt. xi. 29; James i. 21). It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. . . . This meekness, however, which is first a meekness in respect of God, is also such in the face of men, even of evil men, out of a sense that these, with the insults and injuries which they may inflict, are permitted and employed by Him for the chastening and purifying of His servants.’²

Meekness, and Temperance, the virtue which follows next, may be regarded as those fruits of the Spirit whereby especially the rebelliousness of our fallen and disordered nature is subdued, having reference respectively to our higher faculties and to our lower appetites. Meekness reins in the tendency to boastfulness and self-assertion that springs from pride and self-love.

‘It is the beginning of pride when a man departeth from the Lord;
And his heart is departed from Him that made him.’³

¹ Ecclus. xlv. 4; Heb. iii. 5; Num. xii. 3, 7, xx. 1-13.

² *New Testament Synonyms* xlii. p. 147.

³ Ecclus. x. 12.

As against all such proud independence the Spirit of God, taking possession of our spirit and controlling it, binds us in loving and humble fellowship with God.

IX. *Temperance*, or Self-control (which is a better rendering, because a word of wider significance) stands more particularly for the restraint of our bodily passions and desires in obedience to the rule of reason and the dictates of conscience. This the Spirit of God will enable us to exercise.

‘If ye live after the flesh’—according to its tyrannical impulses—‘ye must die’—forfeit your true life; ‘but if by the Spirit’—the Spirit of God inspiring and enabling your higher faculties—‘ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.’¹ Accordingly it was asked for us at our Baptism, ‘that all sinful affections may die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in them.’

This Self-control, like the other fruits of the Spirit, requires watchful cultivation. By fidelity to conscience, by diligence in the discharge of duty, by promptness in banishing suggestions of evil, by the practice of self-denial in matters that may be in themselves indifferent, we are to gain the power

¹ Rom. viii. 13.

of saying No and standing firm when temptation presses us hard. A restive or stumbling horse must not be driven with a slack rein; and our disordered nature, ready to break out in various irregular indulgences, needs a steady hand to control and guide it.

‘Spirit of purity and grace !
 Our weakness, pitying see :
 O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
 And worthier Thee.’

APPENDIX A

THE HYMN *VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS*

THERE are but few prayers addressed directly to the Holy Spirit. This is natural, since He is sent forth for the work of sanctification and illumination by the Father through the glorified Redeemer. The hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which has found such wide acceptance and use in Western Christendom, is on this very account the more worthy of note. Popular tradition ascribes its authorship to the emperor Charlemagne; but it seems more probable that it was really composed by some ecclesiastic attached to the court of his grandson, Charles the Fat, about A.D. 875.¹

¹ See Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*; and Bishop Potter's lecture on the 'Hymns of the Ordinal' in *Lauda Sion*, the New York Church Club Lectures for 1896.

The familiar translation, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,' which is probably the work of Bishop Cosin, was inserted in the Prayer Book of 1662 in the Ordination of Priests. Dear as it must be to many on account of sacred associations, it is not equal as a translation to the more literal version (due to Mr. Caswall and the compilers of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*) which is given here, since Bishop Cosin unhappily failed to reproduce several of the distinctive points of the Latin original. Some of these expressions, in which the hymn keeps close to the teaching of Holy Scripture, are marked in the notes which accompany the hymn.

The longer translation, 'Come, Holy Ghost, eternal God,' which is given in the Ordinations as an alternative, is supposed to be the work of Archbishop Cranmer. It is more of a paraphrase than a translation; but it contains a stanza which, though an addition to the original Latin hymn, expresses the desire of many hearts, and tells of a distinct work of the Spirit of Truth and Love.

'Of strife and of dissension
Dissolve, O Lord, the bands,
And knit the knots of peace and love
Throughout all Christian lands.'

According to custom, this longer version of the hymn is repeated in the American House of Bishops among the devotions before the election of a bishop.

CONFIRMATION

Veni, Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia
Quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui Paraclitus diceris,
Altissimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
Et spiritalis unctio.

Tu septiformis munere,
Dextrae Dei tu digitus,
Tu rite promisso Patris
Sermone ditans guttura.

Accende lumen sensibus,
Infunde amorem cordibus,
Infirma nostri corporis
Virtute firmans perpeti.

Hostem repellas longius,
Pacemque dones protinus,
Ductore sic te praevio
Vitemus omne noxium.

Per te sciamus da Patrem,
Noscamus atque Filium ;
Te utriusque Spiritum
Credamus omni tempore.

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
Vouchsafe within our souls to rest ;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,
And fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

To Thee, the Comforter, we cry,
To Thee, the gift of God most high,
The fount of life, the fire of love,
The soul's anointing from above.

O Finger of the Hand divine,
The sevenfold gifts of grace are Thine ;
True promise of the Father Thou,
Who dost the tongue with power endow.

Thy light to every sense impart,
And shed Thy love in every heart ;
Thine own unfailing might supply
To strengthen our infirmity.

Drive far away our ghostly foe,
And Thine abiding peace bestow ;
If Thou be our preventing Guide,
No evil can our steps betide.

Grant us through Thee, O holy One,
To know the Father and the Son ;
And this be our unchanging creed,
That Thou dost from Them both proceed.

NOTES.

Lines 1-4. See p. 56. The uncreated Spirit of God can enter into more intimate fellowship with the spirit of man, His own workmanship, than can any fellow creature, whether human or angelic.

l. 5. *The Comforter*.—For the force of the title, see Chapter xi.

l. 7. *The fount of life*.—So in the Nicene Creed the Holy Ghost is styled 'the Lord and the Life-giver,' the giver, that is, of man's true, spiritual life. See S. John vii. 37-39, iv. 14; Rev. xxii. 1.

l. 7. *The fire of love*.—S. Luke xii. 49. On the day of Pentecost He came with the appearance of tongues of fire, as with the sound of a rushing wind.

l. 8. *The soul's anointing*.—1 S. John ii. 20, 27. See p. 27.

l. 9. *Finger of the Hand divine*.—S. Luke xi. 20; S. Matt. xii. 28. The figure of the finger represents the delicate touch of the Spirit Who comes to perfect the work of creation and redemption. He traces the law of God on our hearts.

l. 10. *The sevenfold gifts*.—See Chapter x.

l. 11. *The promise of the Father*.—Acts i. 4, 5.

l. 12. *The tongue with power endow*.—Acts ii. 4; and in a different connection S. Matt. x. 20.

l. 13. *Light*.—He guides into all truth of faith and life. S. John xvi. 13. See p. 169.

l. 14. *Love*.—Rom. v. 5. See p. 189.

l. 15. *Might*.—See p. 156, and p. 173.

l. 18. *Peace*.—See p. 191.

The following prayers may fitly be added to the notes on the *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The first is (with only a verbal alteration to suit it for general use) from the Office of Institution in the American Prayer Book ; the second is from *The Manual of Intercessory Prayer* :—

O God, Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the Faithful, visit, we pray thee, thy servants with thy love and favour ; enlighten their minds more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel ; graft in their hearts a love of the truth ; increase in them true religion ; nourish them with all goodness ; and of thy great mercy keep them in the same, O blessed Spirit, whom, with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. Amen.

O merciful Lord, we beseech Thee so abundantly to strengthen Thy servants with the sevenfold gift of Thy Holy Spirit, that they who are admitted by Thine ordinance to the perfection of Christian grace, may grow unto the perfection of Christian life in the exercise of the power which Thou hast given them ; through thy Son Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

ENGLISH.

THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION,

OR LAYING ON OF HANDS, UPON THOSE, THAT ARE BAPTIZED,
AND COME TO YEARS OF DISCRETION.

¶ *Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed, being placed, and standing in order before the Bishop: he (or some other Minister appointed by him) shall read this Preface following.*

To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, That none hereafter shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the ten Commandments, and can also answer to such other questions, as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed, to the end, That Children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same, and also promise that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things as they by their own Confession have assented unto.

AMERICAN.

THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION,

OR LAYING ON OF HANDS UPON THOSE WHO ARE BAPTIZED,
AND COME TO YEARS OF DISCRETION.

¶ *Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed, being placed and standing in order before the Bishop, sitting in his chair near to the Holy Table, he, or some other Minister appointed by him, may read this Preface following; the People standing until the Lord's Prayer.*

To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, That none shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and can also answer to such other Questions as in the short Catechism are contained: Which Order is very convenient to be observed; to the end, that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same; and also promise, that, by the grace of God, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.

¶ *Then the Minister shall present unto the Bishop those who are to be confirmed, and shall say,*

REVEREND Father in God, I present unto you these children [*or these persons*] to receive the Laying on of Hands.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*

Do ye here in the presence of God, and of this Congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow, that was made in your Name at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things, which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?

¶ *And every one shall audibly answer,*

I do.

¶ *The Bishop.*

Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

¶ *Answer.*

Who hath made heaven and earth.

¶ *Bishop.*

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

¶ *Answer.*

Henceforth, world without end.

¶ *Bishop.*

Lord hear our prayers.

¶ *Then the Bishop, or some Minister appointed by him, may say,*

Hear the words of the Evangelist Saint *Luke*, in the eighth Chapter of the Book of the *Acts of the Apostles*.

WHEN the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*

Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this Congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which ye then undertook, or your Sponsors then undertook for you?

¶ *And every one shall audibly answer,*

I do.

Bishop.

OUR help is in the name of the Lord;

Answ. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bishop. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Answ. Henceforth, world without end.

Bishop. Lord, hear our prayer;

¶ *Answer.*

And let our cry come unto thee.

¶ *Bishop.*

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY, and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy *servants* by Water, and the holy Ghost; and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the holy Ghost the Comforter; and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. Amen.

¶ *Then all of them in order, kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hand upon the head of every one severally, saying,*

DEFEND, O Lord, this thy *Child* [or this thy *servant*] with thy heavenly grace, that *he* may continue thine for ever: and daily increase in thy holy Spirit, more and more, until *he* come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*

The Lord be with you.

¶ *Answer.*

And with thy spirit.

¶ *And (all kneeling down) the Bishop shall add,*

Let us pray.

OUR Father which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive

Answ. And let our cry come unto thee.

Bishop. Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. *Amen.*

¶ *Then all of them in order kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hands upon the head of every one severally, saying,*

DEFEND, O Lord, this thy Child [*or this thy servant*] with thy heavenly grace; that *he* may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until *he* come unto thy everlasting kingdom. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say,*
The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy spirit.

¶ *And all kneeling down, the Bishop shall add,*

Let us pray.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive

them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ *And this Collect.*

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who makest us both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable unto thy divine Majesty: We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy *servants*, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands to certify them (by this sign) of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let thy fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them; let thy holy Spirit ever be with them, and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with thee and the holy Ghost liveth and reigneth ever one God world without end. Amen.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy Commandments, that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then the Bishop shall bless them, saying thus,

THE blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you, for ever. Amen.

¶ *And there shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*

those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ *And this Collect.*

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who makest us both to will and to do those things which are good, and acceptable unto thy Divine Majesty; we make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom, after the example of thy holy Apostles, we have now laid our hands, to certify them, by this sign, of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let thy fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them; Let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; And so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life; through our Lord Jesus Christ; who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY LORD, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that, through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

¶ *Then the Bishop shall bless them, saying thus,*

THE blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

¶ *The Minister shall not omit earnestly to move the Persons confirmed to come, without delay, to the Lord's Supper.*

¶ *And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*

NOTES ON THE ORDER

On the first rubric.—In America the administration of Confirmation being ordinarily an incident of the bishop's annual visitation of each cure within his diocese, the candidates will be comparatively few, and can be grouped within the chancel. The bishop is therefore directed to sit in his ordinary chair within the sanctuary rail for the presentation of the candidates, who will stand at the rail in one or more rows until they have renewed their baptismal vows. They should then all kneel, while the bishop stands in front of the altar and says over them the Versicles and the Prayer for the Sevenfold Gift of the Spirit, and then lays his hands on each of them passing along the rail as in giving Holy Communion. This seems the arrangement which is intended by the American rubric.

In England, where Confirmation is commonly administered in a central church to a large number of candidates from neighbouring parishes, the chancel would not afford sufficient room, and the bishop is consequently seated near the entrance to the chancel, the candidates being before him in the nave, and being brought forward, in single file or in small groups, for the Laying on of hands.

The custom (which is quite modern in England) of the bishop sitting while he lays his hands upon the candidates seems (unless in cases of infirmity) unmeaning, and as inappropriate as it would be to administer Baptism or give the marriage blessing in a sitting posture. The custom for the bishop to sit in ordaining is not a parallel case; for there the sentences, 'Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest,' etc., and 'Take thou authority to

preach the Word of God,' etc., are rather words of authoritative commission than of direct prayer like the sentence that accompanies the Laying on of hands in Confirmation, 'Defend, O Lord, this thy child, etc.'

The Preface.—See Chapter i.

The Renewal of Vows.—See Chapter i. and Chapter ix.

The Prayer for the Sevenfold Gift.—See Chapter x. and p. 32.

The Laying on of hands.—See Chapter iii.

The Sentence accompanying the Imposition of hands.—See p. 35.

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